HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 1406 FILED ON: 1/18/2023

HOUSE . . . . . No. 3362

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Kathleen R. LaNatra

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to boater safety to be known as the David Hanson Act.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Kathleen R. LaNatra	*12th Plymouth*	*1/18/2023*
Josh S. Cutler	*6th Plymouth*	*1/18/2023*
Jessica Ann Giannino	*16th Suffolk*	*1/27/2023*
Susan Williams Gifford	*2nd Plymouth*	*1/31/2023*
Michael D. Brady	*Second Plymouth and Norfolk*	*2/1/2023*
Mathew J. Muratore	*1st Plymouth*	*2/6/2023*
Paul McMurtry	*11th Norfolk*	*2/15/2023*
Patrick Joseph Kearney	*4th Plymouth*	*2/16/2023*

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HOUSE . . . . . No. 3362

By Representative LaNatra of Kingston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 3362) of Kathleen R. LaNatra and others relative to boater safety. Transportation.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)

An Act relative to boater safety to be known as the David Hanson Act.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 29 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 2OOOOO the following section:-

Section 2PPPPP. There shall be a Boater Safety Program Fund. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, there shall be credited to the fund: (i) the fees collected pursuant to section 9I and section 9J of chapter 90B; (ii) 75 per cent of all fines, costs, forfeitures, expenses and interest imposed pursuant to sections 2 through 14, inclusive, and sections 36 and 38 of said chapter 90B or any regulation made thereunder; (iii) 75 per cent of all fines issued pursuant to the fourth paragraph of section 10H of chapter 21A; (iv) any revenue from appropriations or other monies authorized by the general court and specifically designated to be credited to the fund; (v) any appropriation, grant, gift or other contribution made to the fund; and (vi) any income derived from the investment of amounts credited to the fund. The remaining 25 per cent of the fines, costs, forfeitures, expenses and interest imposed pursuant to said sections 2 through 14, inclusive, of said chapter 90B, or any regulation made thereunder,

and pursuant to the fourth paragraph of section 10H of chapter 21A shall be distributed equally among the divisions, departments or offices involved or to the division, department or office if a single law enforcement agency was involved. Monies contributed from said 25 per cent of the fines, costs, forfeitures, expenses and interest imposed pursuant to said sections 2 through 14, inclusive, of said chapter 90B, or any regulation made thereunder, and pursuant to the fourth paragraph of section 10H of chapter 21A payable to the office of law enforcement in the executive office of energy and environmental affairs established under section 10A of chapter 21A, shall be deposited in the Massachusetts Environmental Police Trust Fund.

(b) The director of the office of law enforcement, as trustee, shall administer the fund. All amounts credited to the fund may be expended, without further appropriation, for use by the office of law enforcement for the following purposes: (i) the development, administration and management of boater safety training, awareness and education programs relative to boater safety and safe operation of vessels; (ii) administering a paddlecraft safety and responsibility program; (iii) training of law enforcement personnel of the office of law enforcement in courses of instruction including, but not limited to: boat safety instructor training; vessel operation; search, rescue and recovery; boat accident investigations; underwater recovery training; boating under the influence and drug recognition expert training; and costs of any related equipment for administering said training; (iv) equipment required for the investigation of vessel accidents and any search and rescue or recovery made thereto; (vi) enforcement of statutes, regulations and policies applicable to the use of vessels; (vii) grants made by the office of law enforcement through competitive grant process to municipalities for the purposes of clause (i) and other vessel safety activities, including all direct and indirect costs of personnel or contractors of the office of law enforcement; provided, however, that the director of the office of law enforcement shall

report annually, not later than January 15, to the house and senate committees on ways and means and the joint committees on environment, natural resources and agriculture, relative to the source and amount of funds deposited into the fund, the amount distributed and the purpose and recipient of expenditures from the fund.

(c) Monies deposited into the fund that are unexpended at the end of the fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund and shall be available for expenditure in subsequent fiscal years.

(d) Not less than 25 per cent of the monies deposited in the fund shall be expended on a fiscal year basis for the activities identified in clause (i), (ii) or (iii) of subsection (b) or for grants made pursuant to clause (v) of subsection (b) to fund the activities identified in clause (i) of subsection (b).

SECTION 2. Section 1 of chapter 90B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the definitions of "Director" and "Division" inserting in place thereof the following definition:-

"Director",—the director of law enforcement of the office of law enforcement, or authorized designee.

"Division",—the office of law enforcement.

SECTION 3. Said section 1 of said chapter 90B, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting after the definition of "Motorboat" the following 2 definitions:-

"NASBLA",—the national association of state boating law administrators.

"Office of law enforcement",—the office of law enforcement in the executive office of energy and environmental affairs established under section 10A of chapter 21A, also known as the Massachusetts environmental police.

SECTION 4. Said section 1 of said chapter 90B, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out the definition of "Operator" and inserting in place thereof the following definition:-

"Operator",—any person who operates, has charge of the navigation or use of a motorboat or vessel or is responsible for the vessel and its passengers.

SECTION 5. Said Chapter 90B is hereby amended by inserting after section 9B the following 7 sections:-

Section 9C. In sections 9D to 9I, inclusive, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

"Commercial fishing vessel", any vessel, boat, ship or other water craft designed, manufactured and used exclusively for the harvesting of fish, shellfish or crustaceans for purposes of sale, barter or exchange and shall include any vessel documented under the laws of the United States to carry passengers for hire exclusively to harvest fish, shellfish or crustaceans. Commercial fishing vessels shall include fishing trawlers, with or without shellfish dredges, seine vessels, longline vessels, gillnet vessels, hydraulic shellfish dredges and lobster and shellfish vessels manufactured with pot hauler systems; provided, however, vessels designed and manufactured for recreational purposes in accordance with United States Coast Guard regulations, which are utilized for fishing purposes on a seasonal, part-time or occasional basis or

which are utilized in a recreational manner at any time, shall be considered recreational vessels for the purposes of section 9D and shall not be considered a commercial fishing vessel.

"Motorboat", a vessel propelled by machinery, whether or not such machinery is the principal source of propulsion.

"Non-resident", a person whose legal residence is not within the commonwealth.

"Other jurisdiction" or "another jurisdiction", any other state, territory and the District of Columbia; any state, province or territory of Canada; or, any other foreign state or country.

"Person", a natural person.

"Personal watercraft", a motorboat less than 16 feet in length, propelled by an inboard water jet pump or other machinery as its primary source of motor propulsion which is designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing or kneeling on the vessel rather than being operated in the conventional manner by a person sitting or standing inside the vessel.

Section 9D. (a) The director shall establish a boater safety education examination for motorboat operators. The examination shall be in general alignment with the standards set by the NASBLA.

(b) The director may establish rules and regulations pertaining to such boater safety education examinations.

(c) A person may take the boater safety education examination online, via controlled testing software approved by the Commonwealth, for which there will be a $10 "test registration fee" paid to the Commonwealth . Upon the successful completion of the online boater safety education examination, the person shall be issued a boater safety certificate, for which there will

be a $10 “certification fee” also paid to the Commonwealth, allowing the person who successfully completed the online examination to print their Certificate immediately or at a later time. If a person does not pass the boater safety education examination on the first attempt, the person shall take a boater safety education course before retaking the examination. The examination may be taken an unlimited number of times until successfully completed.

(d) No person who was born on or after the specified date shall operate a motorboat on the waters of the commonwealth unless the person complies with the boater safety educational requirements of this section, beginning on the respective dates as follows:

(i) For persons who were born on or after January 1, 1993, beginning on January 1, 2024;

(ii) For persons who were born on or after January 1, 1985, beginning on January 1, 2025;

(e) No person under the age of 12 shall operate a motorboat on the waters of the commonwealth, unless the person is accompanied onboard and directly supervised by a person 18 years of age or older who holds a valid boater safety certificate, showing their qualification to operate motorboats pursuant to clauses (ii) to (iv), inclusive, of subsection (f).

(f) No person 12 years of age or older shall operate a motorboat on the waters of the commonwealth, unless the person has onboard a valid boater safety certificate; provided, however, a person who does not hold a valid boater safety certificate may operate a motorboat if the person:

(i) is accompanied onboard and directly supervised by a person 18 years of age or older who has onboard a valid boater safety certificate showing their qualification to operate motorboats pursuant to clauses (ii) through (iv);

(ii) holds a valid merchant mariner credential, pursuant to 46 USC § 7510, as a vessel master or mate of any tonnage, operator of uninspected passenger vessel, launch operator's license or other similar license to captain a commercial vessel issued by the United States Coast Guard, or an equivalent type license issued by any state of the United States or foreign government; provided, the license is onboard when operating the vessel and available for inspection by a division law enforcement officer or has on board a printed self-certification evidencing such credentials;

(iii) is a non-resident, who is operating a motorboat on the waters of the commonwealth pursuant to section 9H;

(iv) is an active member in the armed forces of the United States, National Guard or United States Coast Guard, and who is qualified to operate motorboats based on training or position in such branch or organization; provided, the person has onboard documentation showing his qualification or has on board a printed self-certification evidencing such credentials;

(v) has acquired new ownership of a motorboat that is numbered by the commonwealth or documented by the United States Coast Guard and has onboard a valid temporary boater safety certificate to operate the vessel printed pursuant to section 9F;

(vi) is an operator of a motorboat rented in the commonwealth accordance with the provisions of section 9G;

(vii) is an operator of a motorboat in a boater safety education course;

(viii) is the operator of a commercial fishing vessel; or

(ix) is a student attending an accredited secondary school, maritime school, college or university and is operating a motorboat in conjunction with a prescribed course of instruction.

(g) The boater safety education requirements and operator age requirements to operate motorboats under this section shall not apply when: (i) the vessel is operated by a division law enforcement officer or employee of a municipal fire department or the department of fire services in the performance of their official duties; (ii) the person is operating the motorboat in reasonable response to an onboard emergency including, but not limited to, when the operator or person supervising the operator pursuant to this section becomes incapacitated or physically unable to operate or supervise the operation of the vessel or in response to another vessel that has declared an emergency situation; (iii) the person is operating the motorboat under the direction of a division law enforcement officer; (iv) the vessel is a ship's lifeboat; (v) the vessel is the property of a branch of the armed forces of the United States, National Guard or United States Coast Guard, or is a military vessel of a foreign country; or (vi) the person operating the vessel is exempted pursuant to regulation or by waiver issued by the director.

(h) The division shall publish on its website: (i) all current laws and regulations applicable to the boater safety education requirements for motorboat operators; and (ii) the content expected to be understood and tested for in the boater safety examination. The Director may have multiple examinations such that not all examinations will ask the same questions.

(i) No person under the age of 16 shall operate a personal watercraft.

(j) An owner of a motorboat or other person 18 years of age or older, having custody or control of a motorboat, who knowingly permits a person under the age of 18, to operate the vessel in violation of this chapter, shall be held liable, jointly and severally with the operator, for any violations, damages or injuries caused by such operator's operation of the vessel and for any fines, penalties or restitution resulting therefrom. Lack of ownership of the vessel or mistake as to the age of the operator shall not be defenses in an action filed pursuant to this section.

Section 9E. (a) (i) The director may require self-certification of all such boater safety education course providers that the examination conditions are enforced. If a provider fails to provide a required self-certification, the director may bar the provider from providing boater safety education courses or examinations. Upon the successful completion of the examination by a person, the director shall arrange for the electronic examination to send an electronic copy of the successful certificate to the division, as well as enable printing of the certificate at the location where the examination is taken. Boater safety certificates issued pursuant to this section shall be in the form prescribed by the director. The director shall be authorized to issue a boater safety certificate to motorboat operators without the completion of a boater safety examination or education course if the person holds a valid boating safety certificate to operate motorboats issued or recognized by the government of another jurisdiction.

(ii) Boater safety education certificates or similar documentation issued or authorized by another governmental jurisdiction shall be valid for the operation of a motorboat or personal watercraft in the commonwealth.

(iii) No person under 12 years of age shall be issued a boater safety certificate.

(iv) Boater safety certificates issued pursuant to this section shall be valid for the lifetime of the person named on the certificate, except as otherwise provided by law, court judgement or administrative hearing conducted by the director or his designee. Any person authorized to enforce the provisions of chapter 90B pursuant to section 12 or the registrar of motor vehicles, may petition the director to immediately suspend a boater safety certificate for emergency or immediate threat purposes. The director may immediately suspend or revoke a boaters safety certificate for such emergency or immediate threat for public safety purposes. Such request for emergency action shall be on forms prescribed by the director.

(b) A boater safety certificate or equivalent documentation possessed by a resident of the commonwealth who, prior to the passage of this act, had successfully completed a boater safety education course for motorboat operators shall be considered valid, if issued by: (i) the director; (ii) a course provider other than the director; or (iii) another governmental jurisdiction; provided, the certificate or documentation evidences the successful passage of a boating safety education course for motorboat operators and, when issued, met the standards of NASBLA or the United States Coast Guard.

(c) In the event the Massachusetts Environmental Police or other law enforcement find a person to be in operation of a vessel and not possessing the aforementioned documentary testing or certification requirements, the person shall be issued a warning ticket to cure the violation ("Ticket to Cure"). Said "Ticket to Cure" shall give the person 30 days turn in certification paperwork, which shall either indicate a certification existed but was not onboard their vessel at the time of inspection, or that a certification was subsequently obtained within the 30-day period.