

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 337  
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Culture, Recreation & Tourism  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Concerns have been raised over serious boating accidents that occur when a driver of a boat loses control and is knocked down or knocked out of the boat. H.B. 337 seeks to prevent injury or death due to boating accidents by prohibiting the operator of certain motorboats that are equipped with an engine cutoff switch from operating the boat without first taking certain precautionary measures.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 337 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code to prohibit a motorboat operator from operating a motorboat less than 26 feet in length and equipped by the manufacturer with an engine cutoff switch while the engine is running and the motorboat is underway without first verifying that the switch is operational and fully functional and, if using a lanyard attachment, properly attaching the lanyard to the operator's body or to the clothing or personal flotation device being worn by the operator or, if using a wireless attachment, properly attaching an operational man-overboard transmitter to each individual on the motorboat. The bill defines "engine cutoff switch" as an emergency switch installed on a motorboat that:

- is designed to shut off the engine if the motorboat operator using a lanyard attachment activates the switch by falling overboard or otherwise moving beyond the length of the lanyard or if the operator or a passenger using a wireless attachment activates the switch by falling overboard and submerging a man-overboard transmitter; and
- attaches physically to the operator through the use of a lanyard worn by the operator or wirelessly through the use of such a transmitter worn by the operator or any similarly equipped passenger.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2019.