

SUBJECT: Changing the definition of an antique boat

COMMITTEE: Culture, Recreation, and Tourism — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 5 ayes — Hilderbran, Kuempel, Baxter, Gallego, Phillips
0 nays
2 absent — Dukes, Dunnam

WITNESSES: None

BACKGROUND: Parks and Wildlife Code, sec. 31.032 requires boat owners to display registration validation stickers on their vessels in the manner prescribed by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) rule. Documented vessels, except those used for commercial shipping or longer than 115 feet, must display a registration validation sticker on both sides of the bow and maintain current documentation through the United States Coast Guard or display the state-assigned TX numbering series with a decal.

HB 2926 by Geren, enacted by the 78th Legislature in 2003, defines an antique boat as one that was manufactured before 1968 and is used for recreational purposes. It required TPWD to adopt rules to allow antique boats to place validation decals in an alternate location. Owners of antique boats now may display the registration validation sticker on the left portion of the windshield or attach the sticker to the certificate number if there is no windshield.

DIGEST: HB 942 would define “antique boat” as having been manufactured 35 or more years before the validation decal issuance date.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2005.

SUPPORTERS SAY: A few years ago, antique boat collectors complained that the TPWD-required placement of boat registration stickers hindered their restoration efforts. While HB 2926, enacted in 2003, allowed for alternate decal placement, it also defined an antique boat as one manufactured before 1968, which was 35 years before that law was enacted. The problem with

this definition is that it does not allow boats made after 1968 to become antiques as they age. For example, in about five years a boat made in 1975 might be considered an antique by collectors. However, it would not be an antique under the law, and the alternate placement of the decal would not be allowed. HB 942 simply would allow any boat, now or in the future, to be considered an antique when it reached the age of 35.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

While not tying the definition of an antique boat to a specific year makes sense, it would be more appropriate to define an antique boat as one that was manufactured 25 years ago, rather than 35 years ago. Twenty-five years or older is the standard age at which experts consider that a classic boat or automobile becomes an antique.

NOTES:

The companion bill, SB 537 by Deuell, has been referred to the Senate Natural Resources Committee.