

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 394
By: Maxey (Patterson)
Subcommittee on Water
4-16-97
Engrossed

DIGEST

Currently, human-powered boat racing, known as rowing, sculling, and crew is a fast-growing professional and leisure sport in Texas. Statewide and national competitions are held in most major Texas cities. Due to the competitive nature of the sport, crew members cannot compete while encumbered by personal flotation devices. Furthermore, space and weight requirements in the water craft prohibit the storage of these devices. Since in most circumstances, these boats are used in protected waters, under controlled circumstances, and oftentimes with multiple crew members, safety risks are minimal. H.B. 394 establishes required equipment for racing shells, rowing shells, and racing kayaks.

PURPOSE

As proposed, H.B. 394 establishes required equipment for racing shells, rowing sculls, and racing kayaks.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 31.073, Parks and Wildlife Code, as follows:

Sec. 31.073. New heading: CANOES, PUNTS, ROWBOATS, SAILBOATS, RUBBER RAFTS, RACING SHELLS, ROWING SCULLS, AND RACING KAYAKS; EQUIPMENT EXEMPTIONS. Provides that all canoes, punts, rowboats, sailboats, and rubber rafts when paddled, poled, oared, or windblown are exempt from all safety equipment requirements except the lights prescribed by the commandant of the Coast Guard for Class A vessels and required under Section 31.064, rather than the lights prescribed for Class A vessels in Section 31.064 of this code. Establishes that racing shells, rowing sculls, and racing kayaks while participating in or practicing for an officially sanctioned race are exempt from all safety equipment requirements except the lights prescribed by the commandant of the Coast Guard for Class A vessels and required under Section 31.064. Defines "racing shell," "rowing scull," and "racing kayak."

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.