

Committee on Regulated Industries

SB 320 — Commercial and Recreational Water Activities

by Senators Sachs, Margolis, and Sobel

The bill amends ch. 327, F.S., relating to Commercial and Recreational Water Activities. The bill defines commercial parasailing, kite boarding or kite surfing, and moored ballooning.

The bill prohibits moored ballooning within 100 feet of the marked channel of the Intracoastal Waterway and it prohibits parasailing operations and moored ballooning within two miles of the boundary of an airport unless otherwise permitted under federal law. It also prohibits kite boarding or kite surfing in areas within a mile from an airport runway.

The bill establishes minimum requirements for liability insurance that must be obtained by the owner or operator engaged in commercial parasailing operations. This includes liability coverage in the amounts of at least one million dollars per occurrence and a two million dollar annual aggregate. The bill requires safety briefings for parasailing participants and maintenance of a weather log by parasailing operators.

The bill provides that the operator of the vessel engaged in commercial parasailing must evaluate weather conditions and wind speeds as defined in the bill. The bill prohibits commercial parasailing during wind speeds that exceed twenty miles per hour, wind gusts fifteen miles per hour greater than the present wind speed, wind speed during gusts that exceeds twenty-five miles per hour, when rain or heavy fog reduce visibility, or when a lightning storm comes within seven miles of the parasailing area. The bill requires that the vessel operator have licensure from the United States Coast Guard appropriate for the number of passengers and the displacement of the vessel.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect October 1, 2014.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 117-1