

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Philip Tatro 271-1403

HB 1360, relative to emergency authority on the public or coastal waters of the state.

Hearing Date: April 30, 2024

Time Opened: 9:21 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:25 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Avar, Pearl, Birdsell and Altschiller

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator Watters

Bill Analysis: This bill allows the department of safety to establish an emergency no wake zone on public and coastal waters for up to 10 days due to weather or environmental conditions.

Sponsors:

Rep. Wolf

Rep. Tanner

Rep. B. Boyd

Rep. Ebel

Rep. Stapleton

Rep. B. Sullivan

Who supports the bill: In total, 43 individuals signed in support of HB 1360. The full sign in sheets are available upon request to the Legislative Aide, Philip Tatro (philip.tatro@leg.state.nh.us).

Who opposes the bill: In total, 2 individuals signed in opposition of HB 1360. The full sign in sheets are available upon request to the Legislative Aide, Philip Tatro (philip.tatro@leg.state.nh.us).

Who is neutral on the bill: None.

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Rep. Dan Wolf

Merrimack – District 7

- Rep. Wolf explained that HB 1360 grants the commissioner of safety clear authority to impose speed limits on public waters during adverse weather or environmental conditions.
- Rep. Wolf recounted a situation from the previous summer when Lake Sunapee experienced record-high water levels, posing significant dangers to navigation.

- Rep. Wolf highlighted the lack of clear authority to impose speed restrictions during such emergencies, leading to local law enforcement taking action independently.
- Rep. Wolf noted the need for statewide dissemination of safety information, which this bill aims to address.
- Rep. Wolf emphasized that HB 1360 empowers the state to issue public notices and reduce speed limits during emergencies without the need for lengthy rulemaking processes.
- Rep. Wolf clarified that the bill does not aim to penalize violators but rather to inform the public and enhance safety measures.

Andrea LaMoreaux
NH Lakes

- Ms. LaMoreaux referenced Rep. Wolf's mention of the high water levels on Lake Sunapee and the confusion regarding authority to implement emergency orders.
- Ms. LaMoreaux emphasized the need for statewide action to address issues related to high water levels, which are becoming more common due to climate change.
- Ms. LaMoreaux expressed the importance of the Department of Safety being able to issue emergency orders to protect property, safety, and water quality.
- Ms. LaMoreaux urged the committee to support the bill, highlighting its significance in addressing statewide challenges related to changing environmental conditions.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None.

Neutral Information Presented: None.