

Marine Industries Association of Florida Week 3 Report

The third week was just as busy as the first and second week regarding all things boating. As we look at the calendars that have already been released for the fourth week, we are going to be just as busy as boating bills continue to take center stage this Legislative Session.

MIAF continues to work with sponsors and members to try and make requested changes to proposed bills that we might have concerns as originally filed, we have some bills we support and some we have openly opposed. The House and the Senate are independent chambers, so all these discussions and conversations are having to happen with sponsors and members on both sides.

MIAF is lucky to have many members who support our industry and understand the economic impact and jobs supported by this industry. We also are fortunate to have many members listening and working with us on subjects such as more on the water law enforcement, outdoor education, protecting public access to our waterways and protecting boater freedoms.

This week MIAF testified in the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee against CS/SB 594 regarding anchoring limitations at seaports. The original bill included an anchoring limitation “up to 5000 feet”. An amendment was filed changing it to “1500 feet” and then a substitute amendment was filed “up to 2500 feet”. Marine Industries Association of Florida and opposed the bill and the amended language. The issue appears to be a local issue arising from Palm Beach County and disagreements regarding mooring fields. The bill as written would impact recreational anchoring areas at Peanut Island. The bill as written would also impact Ft. Pierce and Bay County. If you are interested and would like copies of the maps drawn in those areas, please reach out and we will try and get those to you. This bill is unnecessary and could impact other areas in the state with ports.

Othe bills continuing to move are the boating safety bills also known as Lucy’s Law. These bills are moving through the process but have yet to become identical. The Senate and House bills are different. CS/CS/CS/HB 289 is on the House floor this week. This bill contains language with a five-year residency requirement. We anticipate the bill will pass off the House floor. The Senate version is different at this time, and it remains to be seen if agreements can be reached to make the bills identical. If that is not enough to confuse you, Senate Bill 58 by Senator Garcia on Boater Safety is also up this week in the Senate Criminal Justice Committee and we are eagerly anticipating seeing if there will be an amendment.

If this is not enough to make your head spin, the anchoring bills originating out of Miami are starting to get legs. The House bill was on the agenda this week but was temporarily passed. The Senate companion is up this week in its first committee of reference. MIAF has asked to meet with the sponsors to discuss these bills. As currently written, they impact counties with a population of 1.5 million or more.

Vessel Accountability is moving in the Senate and passed two committees and the House companion by Representative Basabe will be up this week in its first committee of reference. This bill is a statewide approach at trying to



deal with long term storage of vessels, derelict vessels and anchoring.

If you do not think that is enough as we head into the fourth week, the Senate version of the governor's Boater Freedom bill is scheduled to be heard in its first committee of reference. Again, MIAF is very busy!

Below are a few of the bills we will be updating weekly in your report. If you would like us to add or delete any bills, please let us know.

As always, thank you for allowing us to be a voice for you in Tallahassee!

We hope to see you for MIA Days in Tallahassee, April 1st and 2nd. If you would like more information, please visit our website <https://www.marineindustriesassociationflorida.com/>. We are finalizing our speakers for our days in Tallahassee. We have many great speakers including updates from FWC, ASA, Sea Grant, NMMA and discussion topics on Blue Economy, Outdoor Education and a couple more surprises. It is going to be a packed couple of days with lots of information and a lot of issues to discuss at the Capitol as many boating bills seem to keep moving along every week.

Boating Safety Bills -- "Lucy's Law"

Senate Bill 628 Boater Safety by Senator Martin

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2025/628>

House Bill 289 Boating Safety by Representative Oliver and Lopez

<https://flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=80882>

Senate Bill 58 Boater Safety by Garcia

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2025/58>

Boating Safety is a big issue this year. There are three bills currently filed regarding Boating Safety. Senate Bill 628 by Senator Jonathan Martin and House Bill 289 by Representative Vanessa Oliver and Vicki Lopez were filed identically. Senator Ileana Garcia filed a more comprehensive bill that included the provisions of the bills filed by Rep Oliver and Senator Martin. The bills to watch are House Bill 289 and Senate Bill 628.

The bills are a result of a tragic accident that happened in Miami. The bills increase penalties for boating violations and boating under the influence. Includes provisions for boating safety and changes the definition of a livery. We anticipate there to be more changes to these bills as they move. They are still not identical.

Senate Bill 628 is referred to three committees, Senate Criminal Justice, Senate Transportation and Senate Fiscal Policy. The bill was originally filed striking the boater education date of January 1, 1988. An amendment was filed striking that language in the bill and the bill passed the Senate Criminal Justice Committee as a Committee Substitute. The bill passed the Senate Transportation on March 12th at 8:30 am with an amendment. The bill passed unanimously and is now a Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute. The amendment requires individuals who commit a specific boating violation to complete a boater safety course. This would be a mandatory requirement. Marine Industries support this change as it would go after bad actors on Florida waters. **The next stop is the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee.**

The Senate Fiscal Policy Committee is the final stop for this bill before it will be ready for the Senate floor. The Senate Fiscal Policy Committee had not released its agenda as of the writing of this report.

House Bill 289 is also moving this Legislative Session. The bill received three committee references and has already been heard in its first committee and passed with a proposed committee bill that also altered the boater safety education language. We anticipate this to change again.

House Bill 289 is referred to House Criminal Justice Subcommittee where the Proposed Committee Substitute passed unanimously. The bill was referred to the Senate Budget Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee last week but was changed and referred this week to House State Affairs and House Judiciary Committee. CS/HB 289 was heard this week in House State Affairs. The bill was amended with similar language as the Senate bill but still contains a five-year residency requirement. The bill is also forty-five pages, and the Senate Bill is seven. **The bill was taken up in the House Judiciary Committee on March 20th and amended again and is now CS/CS/CS HB 289. The bill is now eighty-one pages. The differences between these bills need to be cleared up before final passage as they must be identical.**

Also of note, Senate Bill 58 by Senator Garcia has been placed on the Senate Criminal Justice Committee this week. We will be watching to see if an amendment is filed to match this Senate Bill to the House version. Please stay tuned as this issue will be one that continues to evolve over the next few weeks.

We will keep you posted as these bills continue to move through the process.

Anchoring (Port Version)

Senate Bill 594 Anchoring or Mooring at Seaports by Senator Rodriguez

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2025/594>

House Bill 795 No Anchoring or Mooring by LaMarca

<https://flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=81434&SessionId=105>

The proposed bills would allow seaports to apply to FWC to prohibit anchoring or mooring for up to 5,000 feet. This could have serious impacts in areas such as Palm Beach, Bay County and Fort Pierce.

The Senate Bill was heard in the first committee of reference and passed with amendments. Questions were asked about impacts to Peanut Island and Palm Beach. More questions arose about the port in Jacksonville. The bill did pass as a Committee Substitute. After the meeting the Senate sponsor met with us to discuss our concerns.

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 594 is currently scheduled to be heard in the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee with an amendment to change “up to 5000 feet” to “up to 1500 feet”. This amendment is an improvement but continues to be a great concern. Again, this impacts more areas in the state than just Palm Beach. The bill and amendment are scheduled to be heard Monday, March 17th at 4 p.m.

The House Bill also received three committees of reference. The House bill is referred to House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee, House Commerce Committee and House State Affairs Committee. MIA had good meetings with the sponsor and expressed concerns regarding the bill. **Unfortunately, Friday afternoon, MIA found out the House Bill has been placed on its first committee of reference, House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee. We will not see any amendments until after 5:00 pm if any are filed. MIA is contacting members of the committee to let them know they oppose this bill.**

Again, we will keep you posted, but these bills impact Palm Beach, Bay County and Ft. Pierce.

Vessel Accountability

Senate Bill 164 Vessel Accountability by Senator Rodriguez

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2025/164>

House Bill 1149 Vessel Accountability by Representative Basabe

<https://flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=81827&SessionId=105>

This bill is aimed at improving long-term storage issues in the state. FWC has made several presentations on this issue in committees in the House and Senate.

The bill creates a free permit for vessel owners and operators. The bill also adds a few violations and penalties. Included in the proposal is the expansion of the Derelict Vessel Prevention and Voluntary Turn-In Program.

We are looking at this bill closely as we believe it is a priority this Session. We are happy to report we have met with both sponsors and had a great dialogue about this proposal.

The Senate Bill received three committees of reference. The bill is referred to the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee, Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government, and Senate Fiscal Policy. The bill passed the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee with two amendments and is now a Committee Substitute. **Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 164 passed the second committee of reference Senate Appropriation Committee on Agriculture, Environment and General Government on March 18th unanimously. The bill has one more committee stop, Senate Fiscal Policy.**

The House Bill is referred to the House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee, House Criminal Justice Subcommittee and House State Affairs Committee. **The House Bill is scheduled to be heard in its first committee of reference, House Natural Resources and Disaster Subcommittee on March 25th.**

Driving and Boating Under the Influence -- "Trenton's Law"

Senate Bill 138 Driving and Boating Under the Influence-Trenton's Law by Senator Wright

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2025/138>

House Bill 687 Driving and Boating Under the Influence-Trenton's Law by Representative Kendall
<https://flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=81302&SessionId=105>

This bill is in response to a tragic accident that resulted in death. The bill adds “impaired substances” to the statute for driving and boating under the influence the bill also has increased penalties and provides for diversion programs.

The Senate bill has passed two committees of reference and was amended in both committee meetings. The bill is now a CS/CS/SB 138. The bill is now a Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute.

The bill is referred to three committees of reference, Senate Criminal Justice, Senate Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice and Senate Fiscal Policy. The bill passed the Senate Criminal Justice Committee as a committee substitute unanimously and passed the Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice with an 8-2 vote. There was discussion in the committee about using “impaired” over “intoxicated”. **The bill passed the Senate Fiscal Policy with a vote of 18-1. The bill is now ready for the Senate floor. The bill is comparable to the House companion.**

House Bill 687 has three committees of reference. The bill is referred to House Criminal Justice Subcommittee, House Justice Budget Subcommittee and House Judiciary Committee. **The House Bill was heard in its first committee of reference with a proposed committee substitute. The bill passed 17-0. The next stop is the Senate Judiciary Committee which is the final committee stop before the House floor.**

The bills are comparable and will have to match up to passe and go to the Governors office for approval.

Anchoring

Senate Bill 866 Anchoring Limitation Areas by Senator Martin
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2025/866>

House Bill 481 Anchoring Limitation Areas by Representative Lopex
<https://flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=81046&SessionId=105>

This is an anchoring bill coming out of Miami Dade. The bill has proposed language that would allow local regulation of vessels outside marked boundaries of mooring fields. Applies to counties with a population of 1.5 million or greater and areas of critical state concerns. The bill also increased the distance of the buffer from anchoring of a mooring field to 300 feet. The bill also sets limitations for overnight anchorage.

The Senate Bill has three committees of reference. The bill is referred to the Senate Environment and Natural Resources, Senate Community Affairs and Senate Rules. **Senate Bill 866 is scheduled to be heard in its first committee of reference this week in Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee on March 25th. The amendment deadline for the committee is March 24th at 11 a.m.**

The House Bill has two committees of reference. The bill is referred to the House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee and the House State Affairs Committee. The bill passed the House Natural

Resources and Disaster Subcommittee on March 11th as a Committee Substitute. **The bill was scheduled to be heard in its final committee stop, the House State Affairs Committee. The bill was temporarily passed. The next State Affairs Committee notice deadline is March 24th at 5 p.m.**

Boater Freedom

Senate Bill 1388 Vessels Bill by Senator Trumbull

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2025/1388>

House Bill 1001 Vessels by Representative Griffiths

<https://flhouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=81631&SessionId=105>

The Governor announced the Boater Freedom bills at a press conference. House Bill 1001 by Representative Griff Griffiths and Senate Bill 1388 by Senator Jay Trumbull. The bills are identical as filed.

The House Bill has three references, House Natural Resources and Disasters Subcommittee, House Criminal Justice Subcommittee and House State Affairs Committee.

The Senate Bill has three committee references, Senate Environmental and Natural Resources, Appropriations Committee Agriculture, Environment and General Government and Fiscal Policy.

As of the writing of this report House Bill 1001 has not been placed on the agenda of its first committee of reference.

Senate Bill 1388 is scheduled to be heard in its first committee of reference, Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee on March 25th. MIA will waive in support.

However, House Bill 735 and Senate Bill 1162 relating to Water Access Facilities are moving through the process. The bill language from these bills is included in the Boater Freedom Bills. Simply they provide for Clean Manufacturers to be under the Clean Marina Program.

Gulf of Mexico/Gulf of America Bills

For those who are following the Gulf of America bills they are moving through the process. **House Bill 575 passed both committees and is now ready to be heard on the House floor. Senate Bill 608 passed the Senate Community Affairs Committee 4-3. The bill only has one more committee, Senate Fiscal Policy. These bills will update the statutes to say Gulf of America.**

Also, Senate Bill 1058 passed its first committee on March 11th with a delete all amendment with a vote of 6-1. The bill is now a committee substitute and has two more committee stops. This bill would update educational materials to read Gulf of America. The House bill was heard in the House Education and Employment Committee on March 13th and passed with a vote of 16-2. The bill is now a committee substitute. The bill had references removed and passed its final committee stop. The House bill passed both committees of reference and is now ready for the House floor.