

SJR109 INTRODUCED



1 SJR109
2 CX1MCQW-1
3 By Senator Gudger
4 RFD:
5 First Read: 02-Apr-26



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SJR___ ESTABLISHING THE ALABAMA BOATING SAFETY TASK FORCE.

WHEREAS, Alabama's lakes, rivers, reservoirs, and coastal waters provide significant opportunities for recreational boating and fishing that contribute to the state's quality of life and outdoor heritage; and

WHEREAS, Alabama's outdoor recreation economy is growing, with fishing tournaments, boating events, and outdoor tourism attracting visitors from across the nation and generating significant economic impact; and

WHEREAS, recreational boating and bass fishing tournaments are major drivers of tourism and economic activity throughout Alabama, supporting local businesses, guiding services, equipment retailers, marinas, lodging providers, and related industries; and

WHEREAS, increasing vessel traffic and organized boating activity on Alabama waterways requires additional public safety considerations and heightens the importance of effective boating safety laws, education, and enforcement because the safe use of Alabama's waterways is essential to protecting the public, reducing preventable accidents, and ensuring that residents and visitors alike can safely enjoy the state's natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alabama maintains boating safety laws, licensing requirements, enforcement mechanisms,



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29 and educational programs intended to promote safe operation
30 of vessels and responsible recreational fishing practices;
31 and

32 WHEREAS, emerging technologies, increasing vessel
33 traffic, evolving tournament fishing practices, and changing
34 patterns of recreational use present new challenges and
35 opportunities for education pertaining to boating safety,
36 operator skill, and enforcement; and

37 WHEREAS, a comprehensive review of boating safety
38 practices, enforcement resources, education programs,
39 infrastructure needs, and recreational fishing regulations
40 would assist the Legislature in ensuring that Alabama's
41 policies both protect public safety and support the
42 continued growth of outdoor recreation; now therefore,

43 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
44 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Alabama Boating Safety
45 Task Force is established to study and review boating safety
46 within the State of Alabama, as well as public safety and
47 enforcement issues relating to boating and outdoor
48 recreation on public waters.

49 (a) The membership of the task force shall consist of
50 all of the following:

51 (1) Two members of the House of Representatives
52 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
53 and one member of the House of Representatives appointed by
54 the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.



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55 (2) Two members of the Senate appointed by the
56 President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and one member of the
57 Senate appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate.

58 (3) The Commissioner of the Department of
59 Conservation and Natural Resources, or his or her designee.

60 (4) The Director of the Marine Patrol Division of the
61 Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency, or his or her
62 designee.

63 (5) The Director of the Alabama Tourism Department,
64 or his or her designee.

65 (6) One representative of the recreational boating
66 industry appointed by the Speaker of the House of
67 Representatives.

68 (7) One representative of the marina or boating
69 services industry appointed by the President Pro Tempore of
70 the Senate.

71 (8) One representative of the professional fishing
72 guide or charter industry appointed by the Speaker of the
73 House of Representatives.

74 (9) One representative of the professional bass
75 fishing tournament industry who is affiliated with Bass
76 Anglers Sportsman Society appointed by the President Pro
77 Tempore of the Senate.

78 (10) One representative of a statewide conservation
79 or fisheries organization appointed by the Speaker of the
80 House of Representatives.



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81 (11) One representative of the recreational fishing
82 equipment or outdoor retail industry appointed by the
83 President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

84 (b) The appointing authorities shall coordinate their
85 appointments to assure the task force membership is
86 inclusive and reflects the racial, gender, geographic,
87 urban, rural, and economic diversity of the state.

88 (c) The task force shall have the following duties:

89 (1) Gather and analyze data related to boating
90 accidents, enforcement activities, and safety education
91 programs.

92 (2) Compile research, information, and
93 recommendations from state agencies, industry
94 representatives, conservation organizations, and the public.

95 (3) Review best practices from other states related
96 to boating safety, including operator education, vessel
97 safety requirements, and enforcement strategies.

98 (4) Develop recommendations for legislative,
99 regulatory, or programmatic improvements.

100 (d) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall
101 designate the chair of the task force, and the Speaker of
102 the House of Representatives shall designate the vice chair
103 of the task force. The first meeting of the task force shall
104 be held at the call of the chair no later than June 1, 2026.
105 The task force may then meet as necessary to conduct
106 business, either in person or remotely, and may conduct
107 meetings in various regions of the state in order to receive
108 input from stakeholders and the public.



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109 (e) The Legislative Services Agency, the Clerk of the
110 House of Representatives, and the Secretary of the Senate
111 shall provide administrative and other assistance for the
112 work of the task force as necessary.

113 (f) (1) The legislative members of the task force
114 shall be entitled to their legislative compensation, per
115 diem, and travel expenses for each day they attend a meeting
116 of the task force pursuant to Section 49 of the Constitution
117 of Alabama 2022.

118 (2) The nonlegislative members of the task force
119 shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for
120 necessary expenses in attending meetings of the task force
121 pursuant to the policies of their respective appointing
122 authority.

123 (g) The task force shall prepare and submit a report
124 of its findings, analysis, and legislative recommendations
125 to the Governor and the Legislature no later than November
126 1, 2026. Upon filing its report with the Legislature, the
127 task force shall stand dissolved and discharged of any
128 future duties and liabilities.

129 (h) Pursuant to Section 36-14-17.1, Code of Alabama
130 1975, the task force shall provide to the Secretary of State
131 a notice of all meetings, the name of each member serving on
132 the task force, and a copy of the final report and other
133 documents produced throughout the duration of the task
134 force.

135 (i) Each appointing authority named herein shall be
136 provided a copy of this resolution upon its passage.