

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6831

To require the Commandant of the Coast Guard to issue regulations for amphibious passenger vessels operating in waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 25, 2022

Mr. CARSON introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To require the Commandant of the Coast Guard to issue regulations for amphibious passenger vessels operating in waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. REQUIREMENTS FOR AMPHIBIOUS PASSENGER**
4 **VESSELS.**

5 (a) REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year
6 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Com-
7 mandant of the Coast Guard shall issue regulations for
8 amphibious passenger vessels operating in waters subject

1 to the jurisdiction of the United States, as defined in sec-
2 tion 2.38 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations (as in
3 effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

4 (b) DEADLINE FOR COMPLIANCE.—The regulations
5 issued under subsection (a) shall take effect not later than
6 24 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

7 (c) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations required
8 under subsection (a) shall include the following:

9 (1) A requirement that operators of amphibious
10 passenger vessels provide reserve buoyancy for such
11 vessels through passive means, including watertight
12 compartmentalization, built-in flotation, or such
13 other means as determined appropriate by the Com-
14 mandant, in order to ensure that such vessels re-
15 main afloat and upright in the event of flooding, in-
16 cluding when carrying a full complement of pas-
17 sengers and crew.

18 (2) A requirement that an operator of an am-
19 phibious passenger vessel—

20 (A) review and notate the forecast of the
21 National Weather Service of the National Oce-
22 anic and Atmospheric Administration in the
23 logbook of the vessel before getting underway
24 and periodically while underway;

1 (B) proceed to the nearest harbor or safe
2 refuge in any case in which a watch or warning
3 is issued for wind speeds exceeding the wind
4 speed equivalent used to certify the stability of
5 such amphibious passenger vessel; and

6 (C) maintain and monitor a weather mon-
7 itor radio receiver at the operator station of the
8 vessel that is capable of being automatically ac-
9 tivated by the warning alarm device of the Na-
10 tional Weather Service.

11 (3) A requirement that—

12 (A) operators of amphibious passenger ves-
13 sels inform passengers that seat belts may not
14 be worn during waterborne operations;

15 (B) before the commencement of water-
16 borne operations, a crew member shall visually
17 check that the seatbelt of each passenger is un-
18 buckled; and

19 (C) operators or crew maintain a log re-
20 cording the actions described in subparagraphs
21 (A) and (B).

22 (4) A requirement for annual training for oper-
23 ators and crew of amphibious passengers vessels, in-
24 cluding—

1 (A) training for personal flotation and seat
2 belt requirements, verifying the integrity of the
3 vessel at the onset of each waterborne departure,
4 identification of weather hazards, and use
5 of National Weather Service resources prior to
6 operation; and

7 (B) training for crew to respond to emergency
8 situations, including flooding, engine
9 compartment fires, man-overboard situations,
10 and in water emergency egress procedures.

11 (d) CONSIDERATION.—In issuing the regulations required
12 under subsection (a), the Commandant shall consider
13 whether personal flotation devices should be required
14 for the duration of the waterborne transit of an amphibious
15 passenger vessel.

16 (e) INTERIM REQUIREMENTS.—Beginning on the
17 date on which the regulations under subsection (a) are
18 issued, the Commandant shall require that operators of
19 amphibious passenger vessels that are not in compliance
20 with such regulations shall be subject to the following requirements:
21

22 (1) Remove the canopies and any window coverings
23 of such vessels for waterborne operations, or
24 install in such vessels a canopy that does not restrict

1 horizontal or vertical escape by passengers in the
2 event of flooding or sinking.

3 (2) If a canopy and window covering are re-
4 moved from any such vessel pursuant to paragraph
5 (1), require that all passengers wear a personal flo-
6 tation device approved by the Coast Guard before
7 the onset of waterborne operations of such vessel.

8 (3) Reengineer such vessels to permanently
9 close all unnecessary access plugs and reduce all
10 through-hull penetrations to the minimum number
11 and size necessary for operation.

12 (4) Install in such vessels independently pow-
13 ered electric bilge pumps that are capable of
14 dewatering such vessels at the volume of the largest
15 remaining penetration in order to supplement an op-
16 erable Higgins pump or a dewatering pump of equiv-
17 alent or greater capacity.

18 (5) Install in such vessels not fewer than 4
19 independently powered bilge alarms.

20 (6) Conduct an in-water inspection of any such
21 vessel after each time a through-hull penetration of
22 such vessel has been removed or uncovered.

23 (7) Verify through an in-water inspection the
24 watertight integrity of any such vessel at the outset
25 of each waterborne departure of such vessel.

1 (8) Install underwater LED lights that activate
2 automatically in an emergency.

3 (9) Otherwise comply with any other provisions
4 of the circular titled “Navigation and Vessel Inspec-
5 tion Circular 1–01” in the inspection, configuration,
6 and operation of such vessels.

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