

HOUSE BILL NO. 930

INTRODUCED BY C. SCHOMER, D. ZOLNIKOV, G. LAMMERS, B. MITCHELL

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING LAWS RELATED TO WATERCRAFT; ALLOWING NIGHTTIME OPERATION OF MOTORBOATS OR VESSELS TOWING PERSONS ENGAGED IN WATERSKIING OR RELATED ACTIVITIES; PROVIDING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND AMENDING SECTION 23-2-529, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 23-2-529, MCA, is amended to read:

"23-2-529. Waterskis and surfboards. (1) A person may not operate a motorboat or vessel on any waters of this state for the purpose of towing a person or persons on waterskis, a surfboard, or similar device unless the operator is accompanied by an observer. If the operator is 12 years of age or younger, there must be a second person, at least 18 years of age, in the vessel to observe the person being towed. The fish and wildlife commission shall adopt rules regarding the proper observation and safe towing of persons on waterskis or similar devices, based on density of use of a body of water.

(2) (a) Except as provided in subsection (2)(b), A a person may not operate a motorboat or vessel towing a person engaged in waterskiing, surfboarding, or similar activity or towing some other contrivances nor may a person engage in those activities at any time between the hours from sunset to sunrise, ~~except that~~

(b) this. The provisions of subsection (2)(a) does-do not apply to:

(i) a motorboat or vessel that is towing one or more persons on waterskis, a surfboard, or a similar device that properly illuminates the vessel and the person being towed, as determined by rules adopted by the fish and wildlife commission; or

(ii) a performer engaged in a professional exhibition or a person engaged in a regatta or race authorized under this part.

(3) All right-of-way rules applying to a towing vessel apply to a person being towed."

1 NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Appropriation.** There is appropriated \$1,000 from the general fund to
2 the department of fish, wildlife, and parks for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, for the purposes of
3 developing rules and disseminating information related to [section 1].

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