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FLOOR DEBATE

April 11, 2003 LB 305, 348

in the age in which individuals can operate a boat. Could be six. There's no law governing that. That was an oversight in the original bill that was passed years ago. We're correcting that. We're also talking about cooperation. One of the things that I've heard Senator Bourne stand on this floor and rail about early in this session is we need to have an efficient government, we need to have a streamlined government. I agree. Portions of this bill accomplish that, and that is ensuring that the investigations that take place in the result of a death, fatality or serious injury are streamlined, not only for the sake of government efficiency, but for the sake of fairness for the individual harmed, or being brought up on charges to ensure that the proper judicial process is carried out. Senator Hudkins' bill talks about setting standards in place for decibel levels by airboats; had a public hearing, just like LB 348. Senator Wehrbein's bill changes the word "may"...or "shall" to "may;" public hearing; came out. Inappropriate? I doubt it. Do not like the timing? We can work through that. I agree. But what I under...what I hear is, is that, well, I'm not sure what I think, so I'm going to oppose it. I don't think that's fair to me. I don't think that's fair to Senator Hudkins or Senator Wehrbein, because I'm willing to work with you. If you want to take the boater education out, fine. We obviously can't do that in our process. Let me share with you a little bit about what goes on in the rest of the world. Utah,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR ERDMAN: ...72 percent decrease in accidents after implementing mandatory education. Boat registration has increased 30 percent. That's mandatory. That's all ages. We're not talking about picking an arbitrary number. If you want it to be 21, I'll work with you. Virginia, 43 percent decrease in accidents after implementing mandatory education; New Jersey, the same percent; Kansas, the same percent. After implementing mandatory education at Lake Hastings, there were no reported accidents and, most importantly, no citations. What we're proposing here works. It's been proven to work. Those who make the boats are supportive of it. Those who ride the boats are supportive of it, if you look at the committee amendment...or committee statement. Thank you, Mr. President.