

HB 1837-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-2990

06/08

HOUSE BILL ***1837-FN***

AN ACT relative to the New Hampshire marine patrol.

SPONSORS: Rep. J. MacDonald, Carr. 6; Rep. Crawford, Carr. 3; Rep. Hamblen, Carr. 3; Rep. Peternel, Carr. 6; Rep. Rung, Hills. 12

COMMITTEE: Resources, Recreation and Development

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ANALYSIS

This bill modifies boating laws by updating penalties, increasing mooring field fees, prohibiting certain operating practices, requiring vessel display standards, and removing specified safety provisions.

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Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.  
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~  
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six*

AN ACT relative to the New Hampshire marine patrol.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 1 Penalties. Amend RSA 270:18 to read as follows:

2 270:18 Penalty.

3 **I.** If any person operates any boat required to be registered under RSA 270-E without  
4 registration, or violates any provision of RSA 270, or **RSA** 270-E, or any rule adopted by the  
5 department of safety relating to the equipment or operation of such boats, or does not exhibit, upon  
6 request, the certificate of registration of such boat to any duly authorized representative of the  
7 department, such person, and the owner of the boat if the boat is operated with his **or her**  
8 permission or assent, shall be guilty of a violation.

9 **II.** *Unless otherwise provided in statute, any person convicted of a violation of any*  
10 *provision of this chapter, or of any rule made under authority thereof, shall be fined \$50*  
11 *plus penalty assessment for a first offense. For any subsequent offense committed during*  
12 *any calendar year, such person shall be fined \$100 plus penalty assessment.*

13 2 Riding on Gunwales, Bow and Transom RSA 270-D:7 is repealed and reenacted to read as  
14 follows:

15 270-D:7 Riding on Gunwales, Bow and Transom. No person shall operate a motorboat while a  
16 person is sitting on the gunwale, transom, or straddling the bow while the motorboat is in operation  
17 underway.

18 3 Public and Congregate Mooring Fields; Permit Required. Amend RSA 270:67, I(c) to read as  
19 follows:

20 (c) Each public mooring field applicant shall be assessed a fee of [~~\$25~~] **\$50** which shall be  
21 deposited in the navigation safety fund established under RSA 270-E:6-a.

22 4 Public and Congregate Mooring Fields; Permit Required. Amend RSA 270:67, II(c) to read as  
23 follows:

24 (c) Each congregated mooring field permitted by the director shall be assessed an annual  
25 mooring fee of [~~\$25~~] **\$50** for each mooring installed in the congregated mooring field which shall be  
26 deposited in the navigation safety fund established under RSA 270-E:6-a.

27 5 Display of Numbers and Decals Required. Amend RSA 270-E:8 to read as follows:

28 270-E:8 Display of Numbers and Decals Required.

29 I. Every vessel required to be registered in this state shall display the boat fee decal under  
30 RSA 270-E:5-a and the vessel numbers issued to the vessel as part of the registration process, unless  
31 the vessel is exempt under the provisions of RSA 270-E:9.

1           II. *The owner shall paint on, attach or otherwise display to each side of the forward*  
2 *half of the vessel the numbers assigned by the department not less than 3 inches in height,*  
3 *with block letters of contrasting color, and they shall be clearly readable when the vessel is*  
4 *being operated. The numbers shall be maintained in legible condition. No numbers other*  
5 *than the numbers validly assigned to a vessel shall be painted, attached or otherwise*  
6 *displayed on either side of the forward half of such vessel.*

7           III. Any person who operates a vessel on the inland or tidal and coastal waters of this state  
8 without displaying the vessel numbers, boat fee decal, or other decal required by this chapter in the  
9 manner required by this chapter, unless exempt under the provisions of RSA 270-E:9, shall be guilty  
10 of a violation for a first offense and a misdemeanor for a second offense.

11           6 Repeal. The following are repealed:

12           I. RSA 270:46-a, relative to boat safety courses.

13           II. RSA 270-D:2-c, III, relative to rental boat safety checklists.

14           7 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.

**HB 1837-FN- FISCAL NOTE  
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT relative to the New Hampshire marine patrol.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

<b>Estimated State Impact</b>				
	<b>FY 2026</b>	<b>FY 2027</b>	<b>FY 2028</b>	<b>FY 2029</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	\$0	Indeterminable		
<i>Revenue Fund</i>	Navigation Safety Fund			
<b>Expenditures*</b>	Indeterminable			
<i>Funding Source</i>	General Fund			
<b>Appropriations*</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source</i>	None			

\*Expenditure = Cost of bill

\*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

<b>Estimated Political Subdivision Impact</b>				
	<b>FY 2026</b>	<b>FY 2027</b>	<b>FY 2028</b>	<b>FY 2029</b>
<b>County Revenue</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>County Expenditures</b>	Indeterminable			
<b>Local Revenue</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Local Expenditures</b>	Indeterminable			

**METHODOLOGY:**

This bill modifies several boating-related statutes affecting penalties, safety requirements, and mooring fees. The bill standardizes violation penalties under RSA 270:18 by establishing a fine of \$50 for a first offense and \$100 for subsequent offenses within the same calendar year. The Department of Safety states the total fiscal impact anticipated with the change in the public mooring field fee is estimated to be less than \$10,000 and change in fine criteria is indeterminable, as it would depend on the activity of future enforcement efforts.

In addition, this bill adds, deletes, or modifies a criminal penalty, or changes statute to which there is a penalty for violation. Therefore, this bill may have an impact on the judicial and correctional systems, which could affect prosecution, incarceration, probation, and parole costs, for the state, as well as county and local governments. A summary of such costs can be found at: [https://gencourt.state.nh.us/lba/Budget/Fiscal\\_Notes/JudicialCorrectionalCosts.pdf](https://gencourt.state.nh.us/lba/Budget/Fiscal_Notes/JudicialCorrectionalCosts.pdf)

**AGENCIES CONTACTED:**

Department of Safety, Judicial Branch, Judicial Council, Department of Justice, Department of Corrections, New Hampshire Association of Counties, and New Hampshire Municipal Association