

Senate Transportation Committee

Vivian Hall 271-3091

SB 51, relative to decal fees and the statewide public boat access program.

Hearing Date: January 28, 2025

Time Opened: 2:22 p.m.

Time Closed: 2:33 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Ricciardi, McConkey, Ward, Fenton and Prentiss

Bill Analysis: This bill ensures decal fees cannot be diverted from the statewide public boat access program.

Sponsors:

Sen. Watters

Sen. McConkey

Sen. Altschiller

Sen. Rochefort

Rep. Darby

Rep. Popovici-Muller

Rep. Spillane

Rep. Khan

Who supports the bill: Senator David Watters, District 4; Altschiller, District 24, Mark McConkey, District 3; Garret Graaskamp, New Hampshire Fish and Game; Meredith Hatfield, The Nature Conservancy; Steve Wingate, New Hampshire Lakes; Senator Debra Altschiller, District 24, Town Councilor Curtis Register.

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Senator David Watters, District 4

- Senator Watters introduced SB 51, which aims to ensure that decal fees for the Safe Boat Program are used solely for their intended purpose, supporting safe and public boat access. The \$5 decal fee contributes to non-lapsing funds, which are crucial for matching federal funds through the Sport Fish Restoration Act. The bill is part of ongoing efforts to sustain Fish and Game funding without leakage from fees.
- Senator Ward asked if the money could be used for principle and interest towards bonds for the Mt.Sunapee State Park Beach boat ramp and if there would be enough to manage the principle and boat fee for the ramp. He said he did not have the numbers.

Garrett Grasskamp, New Hampshire Fish and Game

- Mr.Grasskamp stated that having sufficient funds in the account reduces bonding and interest charges for projects, as it lowers the need for capital account contributions. State funding would remain in place, with a normal inflation rate of around 2.23%, according to the CPI. Properties around the lake and state boat access programs are important for tourism, which requires more attention in retaining funds.
- Senator McConkey asked Mr.Grasskamp if the fee for the decal is \$5.00. and if every boat owner would have to pay that amount. Mr Grasskamp said “yes”.
- Senator McConkey asked about the Mount.Sunapee State Park boat ramps that were built in the last 5-7 years. Mr. Grasskaamp indicated he was not at liberty to comment on that.
- Mr.Grasskamp added no new boat ramp on Lake Sunapee since the 1950's.

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Date Hearing Report completed: February 3, 2025