

Legislative Analysis



RECREATION REGISTRATION FEES

Phone: (517) 373-8080
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House Bill 6230 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Laurie Pohutsky
Committee: Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism
and Outdoor Recreation
Complete to 12-12-24

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 6230 would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) to increase application fees for watercraft that are required to be registered to be operated on the waters of the state. The application fees would increase at three-year intervals, as shown in the table below.

Currently, pontoon vessels are charged the same fee (\$23) regardless of their length. Beginning January 1, 2025, the fee for pontoon vessels under the bill would be based on length (and the same as the fee charged motorboats of the same length).

Vessel type	Current fee	HB 6230 fee 2025-27	HB 6230 fee 2028-30	HB 6230 fee 2031-33	HB 6230 fee beginning 2034
Nonpowered vessel, except canoes or kayaks	\$9	\$11.70	\$13.46	\$14.80	\$15.54
Nonmotorized canoe or kayak	\$5	\$6.50	\$7.48	\$8.22	\$8.63
Motorboats less than 12 feet in length	\$14	\$18.20	\$20.93	\$23.02	\$24.17
Motorboats 12 feet or over but less than 16 feet in length	\$17	\$22.10	\$25.42	\$27.96	\$29.35
Motorboats 16 feet or over but less than 21 feet in length	\$42	\$54.60	\$62.79	\$69.07	\$72.52
Motorboats 21 feet or over but less than 28 feet in length	\$115	\$149.50	\$171.93	\$189.12	\$198.57
Motorboats 28 feet or over but less than 35 feet in length	\$168	\$218.40	\$251.16	\$276.28	\$290.09
Motorboats 35 feet or over but less than 42 feet in length	\$244	\$317.20	\$364.78	\$401.26	\$421.32
Motorboats 42 feet or over but less than 50 feet in length	\$280	\$364	\$418.60	\$460.46	\$483.48
Motorboats 50 feet in length or over	\$448	\$582.40	\$669.76	\$736.74	\$773.57

Pontoon vessels of any length	\$23	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pontoon vessels 12 feet or over but less than 16 feet in length	\$17	\$22.10	\$25.42	\$27.96	\$29.35
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Pontoon vessels 50 feet in length or over	\$448	\$582.40	\$669.76	\$736.74	\$773.57
Motorized canoes of any length	\$14	\$18.20	\$20.93	\$23.02	\$24.17
Vessels licensed under part 473	\$15	\$19.50	\$22.43	\$24.67	\$25.90
Vessels carrying passengers for hire that are in compliance with part 445, or under federal law; and vessels carrying passengers and freight or freight only and owned within this state or hailing from a port within this state	\$45	\$58.50	\$67.28	\$74	\$77.70

The act allows a 15-day permit to be issued by a dealer before the vessel is registered. The fee for the permit is currently \$10. The bill would increase it to \$13 for 2025 through 2027, \$14.95 for 2028 through 2030, \$16.45 for 2031 through 2033, and \$17.27 beginning in 2034.

In addition, a vessel owned by a state agency, a political subdivision (a county, metropolitan authority, municipality, or combination of those), or a state-supported college or university can be registered for a \$3 fee. The bill would increase this to \$5.

Finally, the bill would require all of the fees described above to be adjusted for inflation and rounded to the nearest dollar beginning January 1, 2037, and every three years thereafter.

Beginning in 2037, and then every three years, the fees listed above that are effective in 2034 would have to be increased by the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index from 2025 to the current year.

MCL 324.80124

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 6230 is likely to increase revenue for DNR by increasing the price of certain watercraft registration fees. Current fee rates were set in 1995 PA 58. The precise extent of this revenue increase is unclear at present as current purchase rates and proposed percentage price increases vary by vessel type; the department estimates an annual revenue increase of \$6.9 million in the initial fee period. Revenue from watercraft registrations is credited to the Waterways Account, which primarily supports appropriations in the department's Parks and Recreation Division for recreational boating, boating infrastructure maintenance and capital improvements. A total of \$33.8 million from this account is appropriated in the department's FY 2024-25 budget. Watercraft registration revenue is also credited to the Marine Safety Fund, which primarily supports appropriations in the department's Law Enforcement Division and grants to counties for watercraft safety and education programs. A total of \$3.9 million from this fund is appropriated in the department's FY 2024-25 budget. The bill is unlikely to affect departmental costs as DNR is already engaged in the collection of these registration fees. The bill is also unlikely to affect local government costs or revenues. The department's FY 2024-25 budget totals \$534.6 million Gross (\$76.8 million GF/GP) and 2,545.3 FTE positions.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.