
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5259

AN ACT CONCERNING AN APPLICATION TO THE CONNECTICUT PORT AUTHORITY FOR AN EXTENSION OF ROUTE.

SUMMARY

This bill provides an alternative option for Connecticut-licensed marine pilots to meet the experience requirement for an “extension-of-route.” By law, the Connecticut Pilot Authority (CPA) issues pilotage licenses for specific geographic areas of the Long Island Sound and allows licensees to apply for an expansion of the areas in which they may operate (i.e., “extension-of-route”).

Under current law, a marine pilot applying for an extension-of-route must document to CPA that, within the previous 36 months before applying, he or she made six round trips through the applicable port or waterway (1) as an observing pilot on registered or enrolled vessels that are subject to the state’s compulsory pilotage requirements and (2) while doing the piloting work under a licensed pilot’s supervision. Under the bill, an applicant may alternatively document that he or she made those six trips as a pilot of record on American enrolled vessels on which he or she was not a crew member. Existing law allows experience on American enrolled vessels to be used to obtain initial marine pilot licensure (CGS § 15-13 (a)).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

BACKGROUND

Marine Pilots

A marine pilot is not a member of a vessel’s crew, but comes aboard to help navigate the vessel in or out of port. State-licensed marine pilots are expected to act in the public interest and take reasonable actions to prevent ships under their navigational direction from engaging in unsafe operations.

Under existing law, the CPA licenses marine pilots. The Connecticut Pilot Commission, which is within the CPA for administrative purposes, advises the CPA on marine pilot licensure, safe conduct of vessels, pilotage rates, and the protection of ports and waters in Connecticut. Connecticut marine pilots must, among other things, (1) hold a federal ship master's license (which is required to serve as a ship captain) and a federal pilotage license and (2) complete the required number of trips as a pilot or observing pilot (CGS § 15-13; Conn. Agencies Reg., § 15-15a-7).

Registered and Enrolled Vessels

Registered vessels typically operate in foreign commerce, whereas enrolled vessels generally carry domestic cargo between U.S. ports (referred to as "coastwise" under federal law). Federal law requires that a federally licensed marine pilot accompany coastwise vessels (46 C.F.R. § 15.812(a)(1)).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 35 Nay 0 (03/24/2022)