



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 299

February Session, 2026

Senate Bill No. 371

Senate, April 1, 2026

The Committee on Public Safety and Security reported through SEN. GASTON of the 23rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE REQUIREMENT FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF TWELVE WHILE ON PUBLIC DOCKS, WHARVES AND PIERS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) Notwithstanding the
2 provisions of any special act, municipal charter or home rule ordinance,
3 any child under the age of twelve shall wear a personal flotation device
4 while on any public dock, wharf or pier in the state. As used in this
5 section, "personal flotation device" has the same meaning as provided
6 in 33 CFR 175.13, as amended from time to time.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	New section

PS Joint Favorable

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	GF - Minimal Cost	Up to \$10,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill will result in a minimal cost in FY 27, of up to \$10,000, to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The cost is associated with the purchase of additional personal flotation devices, to support educational programs run by DEEP. Under the bill, personal floatation devices will be required for all children under 12 years old, while on any public dock, wharf, or pier in the state. Additionally, DEEP will require new signage at public docks, wharfs and piers, to inform the public of the required change.

The Out Years

There will be minimal outyear costs associated with the replacement of personal flotation devices.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 371*****AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE REQUIREMENT FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF TWELVE WHILE ON PUBLIC DOCKS, WHARVES AND PIERS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires all children under age 12 to wear a personal flotation device while on any public dock, wharf, or pier in the state. The bill specifies that this requirement applies regardless of any existing special act, municipal charter, or home rule ordinance provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

BACKGROUND***Related Bill***

HB 5273 (File 15), favorably reported by the Children Committee, has identical provisions.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 29 Nay 0 (03/17/2026)