

By: Representative Willis

To: Marine Resources

HOUSE BILL NO. 1551

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 59-21-83, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO PROVIDE THAT PENALTIES APPLICABLE TO RECKLESS OR NEGLIGENT  
3 OPERATION OF A VESSEL ON THE WATERWAYS OF THIS STATE SHALL INCLUDE  
4 CREATING EXCESSIVE WAKING WHICH ENDANGERS PERSONS OR PROPERTIES IN  
5 CONGESTED AREAS OR PIER/DOCK AREAS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 59-21-83, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
8 amended as follows:

9 59-21-83. (1) No vessel shall be operated within this state  
10 in a reckless or negligent manner or at a rate of speed greater  
11 than is reasonable and prudent under the then existing  
12 circumstances or when the operator is so physically or mentally  
13 incapacitated as to be incapable of safely operating such vessel,  
14 or while the operator is under the influence of intoxicating  
15 liquor or narcotics, or when such vessel is overloaded beyond its  
16 reasonable carrying capacity. The provisions of this section  
17 shall be applicable to all watercraft operating on the waters of  
18 this state inclusive of, but not limited to, undocumented or  
19 unnumbered vessels and shall specifically include all vessels



20 exempted from numbering by Section 59-21-5 and surfboards,  
21 aquaplanes, airboats, water-skis, wakeboards or other watercraft.

22 (2) Reckless or negligent operation of a vessel pursuant to  
23 this section shall include, but is not limited to, causing an  
24 excessive wake for the prevailing conditions of the area in which  
25 the vessel is being operated. Excessive wake may include, but is  
26 not limited to, one (1) within one hundred (100) feet of a pier,  
27 boat dock, bulkhead or shoreline, which wake is of such magnitude  
28 as to endanger congested areas, or likely cause damage to moored  
29 boats, piers, docks, shorelines, or other public or private  
30 property.

31 (3) Boats specifically designed to create large wakes for  
32 water-skiing, wakeboarding and similar water sports, and being  
33 used in that manner within one hundred (100) feet of the areas  
34 described hereinabove constitutes reckless or negligent operation  
35 of a vessel in violation of this section.

36 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
37 and after July 1, 2019.

