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An Act Regarding the Oversight and Safety of Certain Commercial Vessels Operating in Maine Waters

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 38 MRSA §87-A, sub-§1, ¶D, as amended by PL 2011, c. 14, §1, is repealed.

Sec. 2. P&SL 1981, c. 98, §5, sub-§2, 2nd ¶ is amended to read:

~~This section shall apply to vessels under enrollment, fishing vessels or vessels powered by sail. This section shall not apply to vessels primarily engaged in the carriage of passengers for hire which operate on a published annual schedule and which are not in excess of 500 feet overall length and have a draft not in excess of 20 feet, so long as the master of any such vessel has navigated that specific vessel on the above described waters with the assistance of a pilot for a minimum of 15 round trips of ingress and egress to the above described waters. Provided, that a pilot shall pilot such vessel as described in this paragraph upon the above described waters at least one round trip during each calendar month that the vessel operates upon the above described waters and at such other times as may be required by the Department of Transportation to ensure port safety after hearing and notice.~~

SUMMARY

Current law allows foreign flag ferry vessels to enter Maine waters without a state pilot on board. All other foreign flag commercial vessels are required to take a pilot if their draft is 9 feet or more. This bill removes the current exemption from state pilotage requirements for foreign flag ferry vessels.