

HB 2668 -- JET SKI PILOT PROGRAM FOR LAKE OF THE OZARKS

SPONSOR: Thomas

This bill creates the "Missouri Patrol on Wave Runners (MO-POWR) Task Force", for the purpose of establishing a law enforcement and first responder personal watercraft patrol in the Lake of the Ozarks. The task force will include voting and nonvoting members. Voting members include, among others: two members of the Senate, one to be appointed by the President Pro Tem of the Senate and one to be appointed by the Minority Floor Leader of the Senate; two members of the House of Representatives, one to be appointed by the Speaker of the House and one to be appointed by the Minority Floor Leader of the House; and representatives from specified law enforcement agencies and fire protection districts. Nonvoting members include a representative from the Missouri State Highway Patrol (MSHP), Water Patrol Division; a representative from the Department of Public Safety; and a member of the general public.

The task force must hold its initial meeting prior to October 1, 2024, and its members will serve without compensation. The task force will employ law enforcement officers and first responders to actively patrol the Lake of the Ozarks on personal watercrafts, and the duties of the personal watercraft patrol are described in the bill. The task force will establish a personal watercraft patrol training program, and the task force will establish membership requirements for participating in the patrol.

The Water Patrol Division of the State Highway Patrol will remain the principal law enforcement entity on the Lake of the Ozarks and the personal watercraft patrol will cooperate with the Water Patrol in all personal watercraft patrol activities conducted on the Lake of the Ozarks. Members of the personal watercraft patrol who are law enforcement officers will have the power of arrest and will carry firearms while serving.

The bill creates the "Missouri Patrol on Wave Runners Task Force Fund", and the funds will be used to implement the personal watercraft patrol.

The provisions of the bill sunset five years after the effective date.