



S. 2482 – A bill to repeal the provision of title 46, United States Code, requiring a license for employment in the business of salvaging on the coast of Florida

FLOOR SITUATION

S. 2482 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) on December 13, 2007. The Senate passed the bill on June 5, 2008, by unanimous consent.

S. 2482 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 26, 2008.

SUMMARY

S. 2482 repeals a requirement for licensing in employment activities regarding salvaging on the coast of Florida.

BACKGROUND

This legislation repeals a law which intended to regulate the wrecking industry in the 1800s by requiring salvage workers to obtain licenses from Federal district court judges. These licenses have not been used since the 1920s, rendering the code obsolete.

In 2006, Congress enacted a law which attempted to clarify the code, but mistakenly referred to “salvaging” rather than “wrecking”. This had the effect of imposing a licensing requirement on the current maritime assistance and towing industry. Over 120,000 towing operations are conducted on the eastern coast of the U.S. each year.

The District Court of Southern Florida has petitioned Congress to repeal the law, as a result of being advised by the Department of Justice that licensing is an Executive, rather than Judicial, responsibility.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has not produced a cost estimate for this legislation as of September 25, 2008.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information contact Adam Hepburn at 6-2302.