

# Sponsor Statement

## CS for SB 98

**“An Act relating to civil liability for boat owners and to civil liability for guest passengers on an aircraft or watercraft; and providing for an effective date.”**

Thousands of Alaskans own private aircraft and/or watercraft and routinely share the enjoyment of these activities with friends, relatives, and neighbors. In doing so, those owners expose themselves to being sued if an accident occurs. [SB 98](#) is the “Good Neighbor Bill.” It will clarify the responsibilities of airplane and boat owners and their guests when injuries are caused by the inherent risk of the activity, not by owner negligence.

Common law recognizes that certain activities carry inherent risks, and that participants take some responsibility for injuries they may sustain while participating in those activities. However, America is a litigious society, and people will sue -- often without consideration for the guest’s responsibility for his or her own injury. SB 98 seeks to clarify in statute that people who accept an invitation to participate in a non-commercial recreational activity in a watercraft or aircraft also accept the inherent risks of such activity.

SB 98 does not absolve the owners of the aircraft or watercraft from maintaining and operating their equipment in a safe and prudent manner.

Due to inherent risks associated with these activities, rising insurance rates have forced many owners to forgo insurance on their expensive equipment. By discouraging frivolous lawsuits, SB 98 will also help keep a lid on the rising costs of insurance for airplane and boat owners.