



Marine Advisory Board Recommendation

HB 481 Anchoring Limitation Areas

The Pompano Beach Marine Advisory Board recommends the City Commission enact an ordinance establishing fines and the possible removal of vessels anchored on our waters for more than thirty-days in a six-month period in accordance with HB 481. HB 481, enacted in the 2025 Florida Legislative Session amends 327.60(2)(f) of the Florida Statutes. This measure aims to reduce unattended, uninsured and poorly maintained vessels that can negatively impact waterway access, safety, and environmental health.

Prior to the enactment of this bill, section 327.60(2)(f) of the Florida Statutes stated that a county or municipality could not enact, continue in effect, or enforce any local ordinance or regulation that governed the anchoring of vessels outside the marked boundaries of mooring fields. As a result, any vessel—whether attended or unattended—could anchor indefinitely on all state waters, that includes areas such as Lake Santa Barbara and the Hillsboro Inlet basin.

In response to an increase in anchoring of unattended and derelict vessels throughout the state, the Florida Legislature amended Chapter 327 during the 2021 Legislative Session. This amendment allowed counties to establish Anchorage Limitation Areas. Anchorage Limitation Areas, as defined in section 327.4108 of the Florida Statutes, are designated zones where vessel anchoring is subject to time limits. Within these areas, a vessel could anchor for up to forty-five consecutive days within a six-month period. However, this forty-five-day period would reset if the vessel provided documentation showing it had moved at least one mile away within those forty-five days. The purpose of this amendment was to prevent waterways from becoming permanent storage areas for unattended vessels and not to discourage legitimate "in navigation" anchoring. Unfortunately, these changes did not fully prevent long-term anchoring. Vessels could be moved within the forty-five-day period and then return, resulting in both attended and unattended vessels remaining on the waters for longer periods.

HB 481 amending 327.60(2)(f)3 of the Florida Statutes gives municipalities within the jurisdiction of a county with a population of 1.5 million or more, the authority to restrict and enforce penalties for vessels anchoring on local waters for more than thirty days within a six-month period. The Marine Advisory Board recommends enacting daily fines for vessels exceeding the thirty-day limit and, if necessary, removal under the Florida Statutes. These measures aim to ensure compliance and protect waterway access and environmental health. To guide implementation, clear communication with vessel owners and consistent enforcement is essential to achieving the intended benefits of the ordinance.

Frank M. Pelly, Chair

9 July 2025