

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9348

To amend title 46, United States Code, to increase the general limit of maritime liability with respect to an owner of a foreign vessel, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 13, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend title 46, United States Code, to increase the general limit of maritime liability with respect to an owner of a foreign vessel, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Justice for Victims
5 of Foreign Vessel Accidents Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. AMENDMENT OF SHIPOWNERS' LIMITATION OF LI-**
2 **ABILITY ACT OF 1851.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 30523 of title 46, United
4 States Code, is amended—

5 (1) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the
6 following:

7 “(a) LIMIT OF OWNER LIABILITY.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in sec-
9 tion 30524 of this title, the liability of—

10 “(A) the owner of a vessel of the United
11 States for any claim, debt, or liability described
12 in subsection (b) shall not exceed the value of
13 the vessel and pending freight; and

14 “(B) the owner of a foreign vessel for any
15 claim, debt, or liability described in subsection
16 (b) shall not exceed the amount that is 10 times
17 the value of the vessel and pending freight.

18 “(2) MULTIPLE OWNERS.—If a vessel has more
19 than one owner, the proportionate share of the liabil-
20 ity under paragraph (1) of any one such owner shall
21 not exceed that owner’s proportionate interest in the
22 vessel and pending freight.”; and

23 (2) in subsection (c)—

24 (A) in the header by striking “WAGES”
25 and inserting “CLAIMS NOT SUBJECT TO LIM-
26 TATION”;

1 (B) by striking “to a claim for wages.”
2 and inserting “to—”; and

3 (C) by adding at the end the following new
4 paragraphs:

5 “(1) a claim for wages; or

6 “(2) with respect to the liability of an owner of
7 a foreign vessel, a claim, debt, or liability arising
8 from personal injury or wrongful death of a person
9 who was not a crewmember or passenger of the for-
10 eign vessel at the time the injury (including fatal in-
11 jury, if applicable) occurred.”.

12 (b) AMENDMENT TO CESSATION OF CERTAIN AC-
13 TIONS.—Section 30529(e) of title 46, United States Code,
14 is amended by striking “the matter in question” and in-
15 serting “a matter subject to limitation under section
16 30523 of this chapter”.

17 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
18 subsections (a) and (b) shall apply with respect to any li-
19 ability subject to section 30523(a) of title 46, United
20 States Code, that arises on or after March 25, 2024.

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