



## S. 3598 - Drug Trafficking Vessel Interdiction Act of 2008

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### FLOOR SITUATION

S. 3598 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 Daniel Inouye (D-HI) on September 25, 2008. The bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent on September 25, 2008.

This legislation is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 28, 2008.

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### SUMMARY

The bill prohibits the intentional operation of a submersible or semi-submersible water vessel that is without identifiable nationality and is navigating into, through, or from waters in an adjacent countries territorial seas.

According to the bill, a vessel's identity can be claimed with documents carried on board the vessel, verbal identification, or by flying a countries flag or ensign. The bill makes such an act, or conspiring to commit such an act, punishable by no more than 15 years of imprisonment and a fine.

*\*Note: Similar legislation previously passed the House - H.R. 6295, on July 29, 2008, by voice vote. ([Legislative Digest for H.R. 6295](#))*

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### BACKGROUND

The Coast Guard estimated that over a four month span in early 2008, an estimated 122 tons of cocaine valued at nearly \$2.7 billion was successfully delivered to the U.S. by self-propelled semi-submersible vessels whose nationality could not be identified.

Under current law, federally punishable maritime offenses include the transportation of explosive, chemical, or nuclear weapons; the transportation of terrorists; and the transportation of drugs into the U.S. Under this legislation, failure to provide national identification would be added as a punishable offense under federal law.

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### COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has not produced a cost estimate for this legislation as of September 28, 2008.

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### STAFF CONTACT

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