Florida State Bill SB 746
(State Recreational Vessel Fee Reduction for EPIRBs/PLBs Owners)

Beacon Manufacturers Workshop
2016
LTJG Jason Wilson
NOAA SARSAT
Operations Support Officer
On July 24th, 2015 Perry Cohen and Austin Stephanos, aged 14, were caught in a sudden squall and were lost at sea. The boys’ boat was found but an exhaustive search never located the boys.

The boys’ parents and friends of the family started the Austin Blu Foundation to raise awareness and promote technologies such as EPIRBS to try and improve boater safety.

Last September staff of the Florida State Legislature reached out to SARSAT for information on EPIRBS and PLBs in the State.

Florida State Bill SB 746 subsequently signed into law this March paving the way for a Beacon Incentive Program.
Effects of the Act

• Provides an incentive, in the form of a boat registration discount, to any boater that can show proof of a registered EPIRB or PLB in each registration year.

• Incentive ranges from a 12% to 23% discount on registration fees based on the boat size and category.

• NOT a mandate to carry an emergency beacon.

• NOT applicable to ELTs.

• The act takes effect July 1st 2016.

• Text of the law can be found at http://laws.flrules.org/2016/126
Questions