To amend title 46, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating to prescribe additional regulations to secure the safety of individuals and property on board certain small passenger vessels, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CARBAJAL introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on __________________________

A BILL

To amend title 46, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating to prescribe additional regulations to secure the safety of individuals and property on board certain small passenger vessels, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Small Passenger Vessel Safety Act of 2019”.
SEC. 2. REGULATIONS FOR COVERED SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS.

Section 3306 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “, including covered small passenger vessels (as defined in subsection (n)(5))” after “vessels subject to inspection”; and

(B) in paragraph (5), by inserting before the period at the end “, including rechargeable devices utilized for personal or commercial electronic equipment”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(n) ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS FOR COVERED SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall prescribe additional regulations to secure the safety of individuals and property on board covered small passenger vessels.

“(2) COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW.—The regulations prescribed under paragraph (1) shall include the provision of a comprehensive review of all requirements for covered small passenger vessels, including calculations, with respect to fire detection,
protection, and suppression systems on board such vessels.

“(3) REQUIREMENTS.—The regulations prescribed under paragraph (1) shall include each of the following requirements for covered small passenger vessels:

“(A) Requirements for the addition of interconnected fire detection, protection, and suppression equipment, including fire extinguishers, in all areas on board such vessels to which passengers have access, including dining areas, sleeping quarters, and lounges.

“(B) Requirements to increase fire detection, protection, and suppression systems on board such vessels in unmanned areas with machinery or areas with other potential heat sources.

“(C) Requirements for fire detection, suppression, and control in all areas on board such vessels to which passengers have access, including dining areas, sleeping quarters, and lounges.

“(D) Requirements for all such vessels to have not less than 2 avenues of escape from all general areas accessible to passengers. Such
avenues of escape shall be located so that if one
avenue is not available another avenue may be
available.

“(E) Requirements, including increased
standards, for marine firefighting training pro-
grams with respect to such vessels to improve
crewmember training and proficiency. Such pro-
grams shall—

“(i) include training regarding ship-
board marine firefighting operations; and

“(ii) be reviewed and maintained by a
third party contractor approved by the
Commandant.

“(F) Requirements for handling, storage,
and operation of flammable items, such as lith-
ium ion batteries, on board such vessels.

“(4) INTERIM POLICIES.—To the maximum ex-
tent practicable, the Secretary shall implement in-
terim policies to, prior to the issuance by the Sec-
retary of final regulations prescribed under para-
graph (1), apply the requirements under paragraph
(3) to covered small passenger vessels.

“(5) DEFINITION OF COVERED SMALL PAS-
SSENGER VESSEL.—In this subsection, the term ‘cov-
ered small passenger vessel’—
“(A) means a small passenger vessel that—

“(i) is less than 100 gross tons as measured under section 14502 of this title, or an alternate tonnage measured under section 14302 of this title as prescribed by the Secretary under section 14104 of this title; and

“(ii) is carrying—

“(I) for overnight domestic voyages, not more 49 passengers; and

“(II) for all other voyages, not more than 150 passengers; and

“(B) includes any wooden vessel constructed prior to March 11, 1996, that carries passengers on overnight domestic voyages.”.

SEC. 3. SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TO INCLUDE ALL SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS.

Title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 3202(b)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(B) by striking “This chapter” and inserting the following:
“(1) IN GENERAL.—This chapter;”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.—Notwithstanding any other provision in this chapter, including paragraph (1)(B), the regulations issued under section 3203, including the safety management system established by such regulations, shall apply to all small passenger vessels.”; and

(2) in section 3203(a), by inserting “(including, for purposes of this section, all small passenger vessels)” after “vessels to which this chapter applies”.