Fessler hails truck, boat, firefighter laws

Truck safety, boat safety, fire-fighter training safety — Sen. Richard Fessler says he had a pretty productive year in 1988.

Gow. James Blanchard signed a 12-bill truck safety package that was sponsored in part by Fessler, R-Commerce, who chairs the Senate State Affairs, Tourism and Transportation Committee.

"This is the most comprehensive package of truck safety bills ever enacted in Michigan," said Blanchard at the signing ceremony, "and one of the strongest in the country."
Fessler's boating safety measure was passed 102-0 by the House of

Representatives and awaits the governor's signature.
A firelighter measure also passed the House by a similar margin.

"SOMETHING HAD to be done to

control the rise in truck-related acci-dents," Fessier said. AAA Michigan generated 165,000 pieces of mail to lawmakers in a 2½-year effort.

A key bill sets up a truck driver safety fund to train drivers in basic driving and inspection skills, the senator said.

Other bills in the package call for:

Covers on truck loads.

Ethnic intimidation bill finally passes

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ANGEL

A bill punishing "ethnic intimidation" got linal state flouse of Representatives passage Thursday and is
on its way to Gov. Blanchard's desk
for a signature.
The House voted 67-20 to concur
in Senate amendments. Another 23
members were absent. All Observer
E Eccentice area lawmakers who
were present voted yes.
"The Senate watered it down, but
it's better than nothing," said the
sponsor, Rep. David Honlgman, RWest Bloomfield.
Under House Bill 4113, a person

Under House Bill 4113, a person

who commits a crime motivated, partially or wholly, by race, color, religion or national origin would be subject to punishments added on to other sentences.

"The theory is to add on greater punishment because it does greater harm to the fabric of society . . . than if the crime were just a random act of destruction or trespass," said Honigman.

He introduced the bill 11/2 years ago, modelling it after a federal stat-ute known as the "Anti-Klan Act."

 Operating brakes on all wheels. Trucks bumpers that extend to within 22 inches of the ground (when federal legislation is enacted with such a requirement).
 Annual state police inspections of vehicles hauling flammable materials.

Fines of up to \$300 of truck owners each time they allow a driver to operate equipment with a safety defect.

An expanded truck accident

form.

• Allowing the Public Safety Commission to fine carriers for PSC violations — expected to yield up to \$2.1 million a year for the truck safety fund.

Restricting trucks to the two right lanes on highways having three or more lanes in each direction.
Requiring truck owners to

side of each vehicle.

• Increasing truck registration fees by \$15 for the truck safety fund. Other area sponsors of the package are Reps. Gerald Law, R-Plymouth, and James Kosteva, D-Canton.

A NEW MARINE Safety Commission will be set up under a bill sponsored by Fessler.

sion will be set up under a bill spon-sored by Fessler.

He said the 15-member commis-sion, under the Department of Natu-ral Resources recercational division, will be able to review boating acci-dents and study marine safety edu-cation programs.

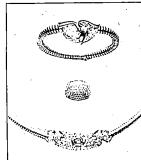
"Boating is a favorite summer ac-tivity of many Michigan residents," said Fessler, whose district includes the lakes area of western Oakland County. "Unfortunately, our lakes are not as safe as they could be, and

ry summer."
He said marine safety is further complicated by the growing popularity of jet skis and sail boards on lake traffic.

A THREE-BILL package to improve firefighting safety was prompted by the death of three Milford-area firefighters during a training session in an old house. Fessier and Sen. Michael O'Brien, D-Detroit, co-sponsored the bills, which have passed the House. The measures will:

Direct the Fire Fighter Training Council to review state and federal standards on live fire training exercises in structures. That council then would make recommendations to the General Industry Safety San Deal with liability for instructures. Instructors certified by the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council word to held liable for mishaps occurring during standard raining procedures.

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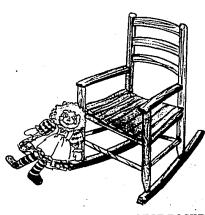


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