

Date of Hearing: March 25, 2026

Fiscal: No

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, Chair

AB 1571 (Michelle Rodriguez) – As Introduced January 12, 2026

SUBJECT: Product safety: recreational water safety: wearable personal flotation devices: infants and children

SYNOPSIS

In response to concerns about the safety of families relying on products such as water wings to keep their kids safe in the water, AB 2146 (Rodriguez, Ch. 307, Stats. 2024) prohibited the sale and distribution of children’s wearable floatation devices that are not approved by the United States Coast Guard (USCG). The definition of “wearable personal floatation devices” in AB 2146 includes “puddle jumper,” a term commonly used to describe a type of swim vest that also happens to be a trademarked product that is USCG approved. To resolve any confusion, this author-sponsored measure would replace that term with “swim vest.” The bill has no known support or opposition.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Prohibits a person or entity from manufacturing, selling, distributing, delivering, holding, or offering for sale in commerce in this state a wearable personal flotation device that is not approved by the USCG. (Health & Saf. Code § 116023.5)
- 2) Defines “wearable personal flotation device” to mean a lifejacket, puddle jumper, water wings, or other flotation device designed to be worn or attached to the body of an infant or child. (Health & Saf. Code § 116023)

THIS BILL:

Removes from the definition of personal flotation device, the term “puddle jumper” and replaces it with “swim vest”.

COMMENT:

In 2024, AB 2146 required that any personal flotation devices manufactured, sold, delivered, distributed, held, or offered for sale in commerce in this state be approved by the USCG in order to be sold or distributed in this state. The definition of “wearable personal flotation device” in the bill included the term “puddle jumper.”

At the time of AB 2146’s enactment, an online search for “puddle jumper” would bring up several listings for products from different manufacturers. Thus, the use of this term reflected an understanding that “puddle jumper” was a commonly used genericism for swim vests. However, Puddle Jumper is also trademarked name for a type of personal flotation device for children made by Bestway, Inc. Puddle Jumpers are USCG approved¹ and thus were not intended to fall

¹ Bestway, “The original Puddle Jumper,” <https://bestwayusa.com/pages/puddle-jumper-usa>.

under AB 2146. AB 1571 simply clarifies the definition of “wearable personal flotation device” by replacing “puddle jumper” with “swim vest,” making it clear that the Legislature did not intend to prohibit the USCG-approved Puddle Jumper from being sold or distributed in California.

According to the author:

The original legislation that put statute into law is very important. Banning personal floatation devices not approved by the U.S. Coast Guard protects families from purchasing products not intended to preserve a life. However, learning more about certain products that technically fall into this category, specifically one that uses the trademark “Puddle Jumper”, unfairly puts this product at risk of being sold in California even if the product is U.S Coast Guard approved. This bill is making a simple but necessary change to resolve this issue.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file.

Opposition

None on file

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