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## OLR Bill Analysis

**sSB 452 (File 369, as amended by Senate "A")\***

### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE RELEASE OF LIGHTER-THAN-AIR BALLOONS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill makes changes to the law on the release of helium or other lighter-than-air gas filled balloons into the atmosphere.

The bill prohibits individuals, nonprofit organizations, firms, and corporations, including the state and its political subdivisions, from knowingly releasing, organizing the release of, or intentionally causing the release of any of these balloons into the atmosphere. Current law allows these individuals and entities to release up to nine of these balloons within a 24-hour period. A violation of the balloon release prohibition is an infraction under current law and the bill. By law, the total fine for the illegal release of balloons is \$75.

Starting January 1, 2027, the bill also requires any retailer that sells these balloons, or offers them for sale, to attach weights to them so they cannot rise into the atmosphere. The retailer must do so before giving the balloons to the customer. Failure to do so subjects the retailer to a Department of Consumer Protection civil penalty of \$20 per violation.

Under the bill, a "retailer" is any firm, partnership, association, or corporation that uses universal product coding in totaling its customer's purchase but does not include carnivals. By law, carnivals are transient enterprises that offer portable mechanical amusement rides or devices for public amusement and entertainment purposes but exclude any enterprise that leases inflatable devices for private residential use.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

\*Senate Amendment "A" strikes the underlying bill and replaces it with provisions that (1) delay, from October 1, 2026, to January 1, 2027,

the date retailers must begin attaching weights to the balloons; (2) subject retailers to a \$20 civil penalty per violation; (3) define the term “retailer;” and (4) make minor and technical changes.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 34 Nay 0 (03/18/2026)