

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6387

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, February 2, 1996

**Title:** An act relating to Puget Sound Dungeness crab licenses.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the holders of Puget Sound Dungeness crab fishing licenses.

**Sponsors:** Senators Spanel, A. Anderson, Snyder, Haugen, Roach and Kohl.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources: 1/18/96, 2/2/96 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6387 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Drew, Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; A. Anderson, Hargrove, Morton, Snyder, Strannigan and Swecker.

**Staff:** Erika Lim (786-7488)

**Background:** The Puget Sound commercial Dungeness crab fishery is a limited-entry fishery administered by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** A number of changes affecting the Puget Sound commercial Dungeness crab fishery are made.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission may open the fishery from October 1 to April 15. If the commission closes or considers closing the fishery for any time between those dates, or if it does not open the fishery at all between those dates, it must hold a public hearing in the north Puget Sound area. The commissioners must consider certain factors if there may be a fishery closure. At least six commissioners must vote to close the fishery between October 1 and April 15, and the closure must be enacted in a way that permits fishers adequate time to remove their gear.

Between April 15 and October 1, the commission may not allow commercial crab fishing by any commercial fishers in Puget Sound recreational crabbing zones.

Each license holder may use up to 100 pots. The 1000 pound landing requirement is repealed. A person who holds two licenses or two persons who each hold a license may fish from the same vessel.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** Changes are made to the Puget Sound commercial crab season and the commission is authorized to close the fishery for part or all of the season if certain procedures are followed.

Changes are made to the commission's authority to ban commercial crab fishing in Puget Sound recreational crabbing zones.

Provisions regarding alternative operator licenses remain unchanged.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** The provisions of this bill are needed to ensure the viability of inner sound crabbers, particularly in light of last year's sudden closure of the season. It also will eventually reduce the size of the fleet and will ensure active participation by license holders.

**Testimony Against:** The department's ability to manage the resource would be severely limited.

**Testified:** Tom Barton, ISCA (pro); Ed Knudson, ISCA (pro); Gary Klein, Charterboat Assn. of Puget Sound (con); Ric Abbett, Trout Unlimited (con); Judith Freeman, WDFW; Alan Erickson, Puget Sound crab fisherman (pro); John Rantz, ISCA (pro); Joe Verdoes, ISCA (pro).