

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2436

As Reported by House Committee On:

Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to group fishing permits.

Brief Description: Allowing the issuance of a group fishing permit to a facility.

Sponsors: Representatives Eickmeyer, Buck, Doumit, Rockefeller, Clements, Jackley and Haigh; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 1/30/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes the director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife to issue a group fishing license to a medical care facility.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Doumit, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Sump, Ranking Minority Member; Buck, Eickmeyer, Ericksen, Jackley, McDermott, Orcutt, Pearson and Upthegrove.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

A license issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (department) is required to hunt for most wild animals and fish and to harvest seaweed and shellfish. Licenses are also necessary in order to practice taxidermy for a profit, deal in raw furs, act as a fishing guide, operate a game farm, purchase or sell game fish, or use department-managed facilities.

Physically or mentally disabled persons, mentally ill persons, hospital patients, and senior citizens who are in the care of a state-operated facility are allowed to fish and harvest shellfish during an open season without obtaining an individual license or paying the

individual license fee if the facility they are associated with has a group permit. To qualify for the group permit, the fishing must be occasional and be supervised by staff of a care facility.

Summary of Bill:

The director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife is permitted to issue a group fishing permit to any licensed, state-operated, or non-profit facility that serves physically or mentally disabled persons, mentally ill persons, hospital patients, seriously or terminally ill persons, or senior citizens. Individuals covered by the facility's permit may fish and harvest shellfish without individual licenses or the payment of individual license fees. There are no requirements that the fishing be occasional or supervised.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission is directed to adopt rules that provide for the conditions under which a group fishing permit may be issued.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: Many institutions that provide significant and important care would appreciate being able to help their patients enjoy fishing on a regular basis. Many disabled children have never had the opportunity to fish before, and this bill allows care facilities to give their patients this important opportunity. In reality, few fish are caught from institutional permits, but the patients fully enjoy just having the opportunity to drop a line into the water and try.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Eickmeyer, prime sponsor; Steven J. Trujillo, Prime Time Inc.; and Jack Needham, Department of Fish and Wildlife.