

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2061

As Reported By House Committee On:
Fisheries & Wildlife

Title: An act relating to hunter education.

Brief Description: Changing hunter education provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Chappell and King.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Fisheries & Wildlife, March 2, 1993, DPA.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 8 members: Representatives King, Chair; Orr, Vice Chair; Fuhrman, Ranking Minority Member; Sehlin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Basich; Foreman; Lemmon; and Scott.

Staff: Keitlyn Watson (786-7310).

Background: RCW 75.08.420 requires anyone under 18 years of age who purchases a hunting license from the Department of Wildlife to complete a hunter safety education course of at least six hours. WAC 232-12-227 requires that the course be at least 10 hours. In 1992, between 10,000 and 11,000 individuals completed the course.

Summary of Amended Bill: The minimum number of hours of hunter safety education required for a license is changed from six to 10 hours. Anyone born after January 1, 1972, who purchases a hunting license after January 1, 1995, from the Department of Wildlife must have completed such a course.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill: Applies certification provisions for hunting licenses to only those purchasing a license after January 1, 1995. Until January 1, 1995, certification would not be required.

Fiscal Note: Requested March 2, 1993.

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

Testimony For: (on original bill) Ten hour hunter safety education courses are already required by the Department of Wildlife. Recent trends in hunting accidents suggest that hunters 18 and under, who are currently required to take hunter education courses, have fewer accidents than those in the 19-29 age group, suggesting that the courses would improve safety in the older age group. Requiring all new hunters regardless of age to take the course would inspire greater public confidence in hunters and hunting.

Testimony Against: (on original bill) None.

Witnesses: (on original bill) Mik Mikitik, Department of Wildlife (neutral; suggest that department be authorized to charge fees to offset fiscal impact, and that implementation date be changed to allow more time for public notice); and Fred Slyfield, Neal Houser and Gary Kasowski, Washington Hunter Education Instructors Association (pro).