

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6125

AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 11, 1994

Brief Description: Revising fees and procedures for recreational fish and hunting licenses.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Senators Owen, Haugen, Sellar, Spanel and Winsley; by request of Department of Fisheries and Department of Wildlife)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6125 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Owen, Chairman; Hargrove, Vice Chairman; Franklin, Oke, Sellar, Snyder and Spanel.

Staff: Kari Guy (786-7464)

Hearing Dates: January 19, 1994

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6125 as recommended by Committee on Natural Resources be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rinehart, Chairman; Bauer, Cantu, Gaspard, Hargrove, Hochstatter, Ludwig, Moyer, Owen, L. Smith, Snyder, Spanel, Talmadge and Wojahn.

Staff: Cindi Yates (786-7437)

Hearing Dates: February 2, 1994; February 7, 1994

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

BACKGROUND:

Prior to 1993, hunting and game fish licenses were administered by the Department of Wildlife, and food fish and shellfish licenses were administered by the Department of Fisheries. With the merger of those two departments, all licenses will be administered by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Consolidating the license categories into a single form is considered by the department to be more efficient and user friendly.

SUMMARY:

A sport recreational license is created to include the personal use food fish, game fish, hunting, hound and eastern Washington upland bird licenses, and warm water game fish

surcharge. The license may also include provisions for other special licenses.

Existing license provisions are amended to develop consistency between requirements for shellfish, food fish, game fish, and hunting licenses. The senior personal use food fish license fees are set at \$3. A non-resident game fish license fee of \$20 is established for juveniles. The time period for a temporary license for food fish and shellfish is expanded from two days to three days. Uniform residency requirements, expiration dates, and veteran and disability exemptions are established for all licenses.

Fees for a personal use food fish license are increased by \$1 to include the regional fisheries enhancement group surcharge.

Seaweed is added to the shellfish license to comply with provisions of SB 5980, adopted into law in 1993. Crawfish are removed from shellfish permit requirements.

The director is authorized to establish by rule the conditions for issuance of duplicate licenses, permits, tags, stamps and catch record cards. The fee for a duplicate license is set at \$10 for licenses that are \$10 and over, and for licenses under \$10, the duplicate fee is the value of the license.

The effective date of the act is January 1, 1995. Licenses issued by either department in 1994 will be valid until their stated expiration date.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

Effective Date: January 1, 1995

TESTIMONY FOR:

This will be a more efficient system for recreational hunters and fishers.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: PRO: Lembit Ratassepp, Dept. of Wildlife; Loren Stern, Dept. of Fisheries; Chuck Lawrence, Veterans Affairs Coalition; Tri Howard, Washington Department of Veterans Affairs

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

A one-day game fish licenses is created at a fee of \$3 for residents and \$7 for nonresidents.

An honorably discharged veteran who is a resident and is confined to a wheelchair may receive a hunting license free of charge.

A warm water game fish enhancement program is created within the Department of Fish and Wildlife. A combined approach of habitat improvement and fish culture will be utilized to improve warm water fish populations. The new program will be funded by a warm water fish surcharge with an annual fee of \$5. Persons over 70 years old will be required to pay a \$1 surcharge. Persons under 15 years old may fish for warm water fish for free. The warm water program will be restricted to bass, channel catfish, crappie, walleye and tiger musky. A dedicated account is established in the state wildlife fund, subject to legislative appropriation.

The warm water fish surcharge takes effect January 1, 1995.