

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5437

As Reported by House Committee On:

Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to photo identification required for hunting and fishing licenses.

Brief Description: Requiring holders of fish and wildlife licenses purchased over the internet or telephone to provide enforcement officers with photo identification.

Sponsors: By Senators Oke and Jacobsen; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 3/28/01 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill (As Amended by House Committee)

- Allows Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) enforcement officers to require a person age 18 or older that is hunting or fishing to exhibit photo identification if the person purchased their hunting or fishing license over the internet or telephone.
- Allows DFW enforcement officers to require a person hunting to provide a signature for comparison to the signature on their license.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Doumit, Democratic Co-Chair; Sump, Republican Co-Chair; Pearson, Republican Vice Chair; Rockefeller, Democratic Vice Chair; Buck, G. Chandler, Edwards, Eickmeyer, Ericksen, Jackley, Murray and Pennington.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

DFW is authorized by the state to issue licenses for various activities involving fish and

wildlife. A DFW license is required to hunt for wild animals, birds, fish or harvest shellfish or seaweed. A non-transferable recreational license may currently be purchased through one of DFW's many authorized dealers throughout the state. The authorized dealer collects the license fee, verifies identification, and provides the paper license to the customer. Beginning in May of this year, DFW plans to offer licenses for sale over the internet and telephone. Customers purchasing their license in this way are not required to provide photo identification at the time of purchase.

Enforcement officers employed by DFW are authorized to temporarily stop a person who is engaged in hunting or fishing activities in order to check for valid licenses, tags, permits, stamps, or catch records. If the person is stopped while in the process of fishing or harvesting shellfish or seaweed, the officer may require the person to provide a signature for comparison with the signature on the license. The enforcement officers do not have the authority to ask for photo identification.

Summary of Amended Bill:

A person engaged in hunting or fishing may be required to exhibit photo identification to DFW enforcement officers if the person purchased their hunting or fishing license over the internet or telephone and the person is 18 years of age or older. The enforcement officer may also require a person hunting to provide a signature for comparison to the signature on their license.

Amended Bill Compared to Bill:

The introduced bill required all persons purchasing their hunting or fishing license over the internet or telephone to show photo identification upon request of a DFW officer. The substitute bill limits that requirement to those hunters and fishers age 18 or older.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: When hunters and fishers purchase their licenses over the internet there is no way to verify identification. Without the ability to verify the identity of license-holders it is impossible to combat fraud. When a license is issued over the internet or phone the purchaser receives a number and is allowed to hunt or fish immediately. This bill would give enforcement officers the authority needed to verify that the number a hunter or fisher is using was indeed issued to him or her.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Josh Weiss, Department of Fish and Wildlife.