

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5531

As Passed Senate, March 9, 2001

Title: An act relating to limitations on fishery licenses.

Brief Description: Restricting shrimp pot and commercial fishery licenses.

Sponsors: Senator Spanel.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Parks & Shorelines: 2/19/01, 2/21/01 [DP].
Passed Senate: 3/9/01, 41-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, PARKS & SHORELINES

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Spanel, Vice Chair; Constantine, Hargrove, Morton, Oke, Snyder and Stevens.

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Background: In 1994, the Legislature created an emerging fishery for shrimp pots in the Puget Sound. In the year 2000, the Legislature converted the emerging fishery into a limited entry fishery. The limited entry fishery controlled the amount of shrimp pot fishing effort by establishing a management plan relating to the operators in the fishery. The beginning of the limited entry program was January 1, 2000. The shrimp trawl Puget Sound fishery was also converted from an emerging fishery to a limited entry fishery on January 1, 2000.

Commercial fishing licenses that are transferrable survive the death of the holder of the license. The licenses are treated as personal property upon the death of the licensee for purposes of inheritance. Both the Puget Sound shrimp pot fishery license and the shrimp trawl fishery license were made nontransferrable when the Legislature authorized their conversion into a limited entry fishery.

At the present time, there are 18 people involved in the non-Indian Puget Sound shrimp pot fishery and there are eight trawling vessels. The fishery is shared with the tribal fishery.

Summary of Bill: Both the shrimp pot Puget Sound fishery licenses and the shrimp trawl Puget Sound fishery licenses may be inherited by will. Beginning January 1, 2002, shrimp pot fishery licenses and shrimp trawl fishery licenses are made transferrable. Beginning January 1, 2002, the holder of a shrimp pot Puget Sound fishery license or a shrimp trawl Puget Sound fishery license may designate only an immediate family member as the alternative operator for the license unless there is a medical emergency.

A holder of one of the licenses with a medical emergency that can be documented by two doctors may designate some person as an alternative operator for up to a two-year period.

The two-year period may be extended by the director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife upon recommendation of the Puget Sound Shrimp Advisory Board. If the licensee has no immediate family member who is capable of operating the license, the Puget Sound Shrimp Advisory Board can designate an alternate operator who is not an immediate family member if it is allowed by the director of the department.

A holder of a shrimp pot Puget Sound fishery license or a shrimp trawl Puget Sound fishery license may designate only one alternate operator at a time.

Any person who is designated as an alternate operator must possess an alternate operator's license and be designated on the license before engaging in the fishery. The holder of a Dungeness crab coastal fishery class B license may designate up to two alternate operators for the license. A charter boat licensee is specifically authorized to designate up to two alternate operators for a license.

The same vessel may be designated on two of the following licenses if the licenses are owned by the same licensee: a Puget Sound Dungeness crab fishery license, a shrimp pot Puget Sound fishery license, a sea cucumber dive fishery license and the sea urchin dive fishery license.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 13, 2001.

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

Testimony For: The shrimp pot commercial fishery needs to transition from an emerging fishery to a limited entry fishery.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Steve Farler, Randy Richardson, Puget Sound Shrimp Assn.; Bruce Samuelson, Shrimp Boat Trawlers; Gary Hull, shrimp fisher.