
**Fisheries, Ecology & Parks
Committee**

HB 1342

Brief Description: Exempting active military personnel and veterans from hunter education certificate requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Orcutt, Mielke, Cooper, McMahan, Anderson, Campbell and Bush.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Exempts certain classes of individuals with a military background from the requirement of obtaining certification of completion of a course in hunting safety and sportsmanship prior to being issued a hunting license.

Hearing Date: 2/4/03

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

A recreational license issued by the director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (department) is required for any person seeking to hunt for wild animals in Washington (RCW 77.32.010). Prior to being issued a hunting license, individuals born after January 1, 1972 must present the director of the department with a certification proving that the individual has completed a ten-hour course in the safe handling of firearms, safety, conservation, and sportsmanship (RCW 77.32.155). Vendors selling a hunting license may accept either a certification card or an expired hunting license from the previous season as proof of program completion.

The director of the department is authorized to establish a training program, including the prescription of the type of instruction that must be provided, along with the qualification requirements for the instructors (RCW 77.32.155). The director of the department is also authorized to accept certificates from other states with similar course requirements.

Hunter education courses focus on three broad areas: firearms and outdoor safety, wildlife management, and hunter responsibility. Average classes involve four to six sessions and

require the student to pass a written test and demonstrate firearms handling skills. The department offers both a live course option and a home study option. Live courses are scheduled throughout the state.

Summary of Bill:

Certain classes of individuals are exempted from the requirement of obtaining certification of completion of a course in the safe handling of a firearm, safety, conservation, and sportsmanship before being issued a hunting license. These individuals include: 1) all active military personnel permanently stationed at a Washington military installation, and 2) all Washington residents who have received an honorable discharge or a medical discharge from federal military service.

Any person seeking to qualify for exemptions to the certification requirement is responsible for providing the appropriate identification and paperwork.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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