

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2332

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation, February 16, 2006

Title: An act relating to recreational fishing for albacore tuna.

Brief Description: Concerning recreational fishing for albacore tuna.

Sponsors: Representatives Buck, Blake, Upthegrove, Haler and B. Sullivan.

Brief History: Passed House: 1/25/06, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 2/15/06, 2/16/06 [DP, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair; Oke, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Morton, Spanel and Swecker.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Stevens.

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Background: The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) manages wildlife and is responsible for authorizing the taking of wildlife. With the exception of a few fish species, the Department requires a license to fish recreationally, harvest shellfish, and take seaweed. Licenses are sold to persons 15 years or older for an annual fee. The fee is \$36 for residents, \$72 for non-residents, and \$5 for youth. Currently, a license is not required to fish recreationally for albacore tuna.

As a result of this exception, there are no catch limits or permission requirements on albacore tuna fishing in the state, which includes coastal waters out to 200 miles offshore. According to the Department, a voluntary logbook program revealed that recreational fishers caught more than 12,000 albacore tuna off the Washington coast in 2005, up from 8,000 in 2000.

In terms of federal and international regulation, albacore tuna is a highly migratory species (HMS) which is governed by the Pacific Fishery Management Council's HMS Management Plan, as well as several international fisheries treaties. According to the Department, in the future, the HMS Management Plan may require recreational albacore tuna fishers to obtain federal fishing permits in states which do not require state licenses for it.

Summary of Bill: A state personal-use fishing license is required to fish for albacore tuna.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This is the same as the Senate bill and is needed so the state will have funds for albacore management and so the state fishers will not be required to have a federal license in the future if one is required.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fishers.