

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5227

C 418 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning wildlife reporting requirements.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen, Doumit, Fraser and Rasmussen; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife).

Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation **Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

Background: The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) mandates by rule that all hunters report their hunting activity for deer, elk, bear, or turkey by January 31 of each year. Currently, under RCW 77.15, a violation of the Department's reporting requirements is a misdemeanor.

According to Department figures, 70 percent of hunters reported wildlife harvests in 2001, 66 percent reported in 2002, and 65 percent reported in 2003. The Department asserts that a reporting rate below 90 percent reduces the accuracy of its harvest estimates, making it difficult to determine harvest impacts and increasing the cost of harvest estimation.

Summary: The Department may adopt a rule requiring the reporting of harvest effort for wildlife. The Department may also set an administrative penalty of up to ten dollars for failure to report harvest effort. The Department may require that this administrative penalty be paid before a hunter can obtain a new license.

The Department must provide reasonable options for a hunter to submit reporting information to a live operator prior to the reporting deadline. The Department must also report to the legislature annually regarding the rate of hunter reporting compliance and the amount of administrative penalties collected.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	43	4
House	56	40

Effective: July 24, 2005