

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5227

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As Passed Senate, April 23, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to wildlife harvest reports.

**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).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 1/27/05, 2/23/05 [DPS-WM].  
Ways & Means: 3/4/05, 3/7/05 [DPS(NROR)].  
Passed Senate: 4/23/05, 43-4.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5227 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

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

**Staff:** Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5227 as recommended by Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Doumit, Vice Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Fairley, Kohl-Welles, Parlette, Pflug, Pridemore, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Thibaudeau.

**Staff:** Kirstan Arestad (786-7708)

**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 of Bill:** The Department may adopt a rule requiring the reporting of harvesting effort for wildlife. The Department may also set an administrative fee of up to ten dollars for failure to report harvesting effort, which must be paid before a current license may be obtained.

**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:** Imposing an administrative fee will increase the number of hunters who comply with reporting requirements, thereby increasing the data available to the Department in managing wildlife populations. Moving to an administrative fee will also take away the threat of a misdemeanor for those who fail to report.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Who Testified:** PRO: Martin Keilwitz, Western Washington Wildlife Council; Ed Owens, Hunters Heritage Council; Fred Zitterkopf, Inland NW Wildlife Council; Steve Pozzanghera, Department of Fish and Wildlife; Angela Stringer, Game Management Advisory Council; Dave Ware, Department of Fish and Wildlife.