

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6401

As Passed Senate, February 14, 2006

Title: An act relating to charter licenses.

Brief Description: Modifying definitions of charter licenses.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senators Doumit, Jacobsen, Schoesler, Regala, Morton and Honeyford).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 1/23/06, 2/2/06 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 2/14/06, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6401 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: A salmon charter license or a nonsalmon license is required to operate a charter boat to take food fish and shellfish.

A charter boat is defined as a vessel from which persons may, for a fee, fish for food fish or shellfish for personal use, and that brings food fish or shellfish into state ports or brings food fish or shellfish taken from state waters into United States ports. The term does not mean a vessel used by a guide for clients fishing for food fish for personal use in freshwater rivers, streams, and lakes, other than Lake Washington or the Columbia River below the bridge at Longview.

A charter boat licensed in Oregon may fish without a Washington charter license, when operating from the southern border of the state to Leadbetter Point, so long as the vessel does not land at any Washington port with the purpose of taking on or discharging passengers. This provision applies so long as the state of Oregon has reciprocal laws and regulations.

Summary of Bill: The circumstances under which a charter license is required are changed. A salmon or nonsalmon charter license is required to operate a charter boat from which persons may, for a fee, fish for food fish and shellfish.

The definition of a charter boat is changed to include vessels from which persons may, for a fee, fish for food fish or shellfish for personal use in specified state waters, or offshore waters or the waters of other states. Those state waters specified are Puget Sound, Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay, Pacific Ocean waters, Lake Washington, or the Columbia River below the bridge at Longview.

A charter boat licensed in Oregon may fish without a Washington charter license, when operating from the southern border of the state to Leadbetter Point, so long as the vessel does not take on or discharge passengers from a Washington port, the Washington shore, or a dock, landing, or other point in Washington.

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 bill does not change the intent of the charter vessel license provisions, but is simply a tuneup to allow better enforcement of the current law. Officers are having trouble enforcing the law because of several loopholes, which can be closed by clarifying the language. The charter business has faced many challenges over the past 25 years and one current challenge is competition from charters operating illegally.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Captain Mike Cenci, DFW; Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries/Ilwaco Charterboats; Mark Cedergreen, Westport Charterboat Association.