

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1476

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to charter licenses.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions with regard to nonsalmon charter licenses.

Sponsors: Representatives Blake and Kretz.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/5/07, 2/7/07 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires a charter boat operator to acquire a salmon charter license to fish for albacore tuna.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives B. Sullivan, Chair; Blake, Vice Chair; Kretz, Ranking Minority Member; Warnick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dickerson, Eickmeyer, Grant, Hailey, Kagi, Lantz, McCoy, Newhouse, Orcutt and VanDeWege.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Strow.

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

Background:

A charter license is required from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) in order to operate a vessel where paying customers fish for shellfish or food fish. A salmon charter license is required to fish for salmon and shellfish. No new salmon charter licenses have been authorized for issuance since May 28, 1977. A salmon charter license can be acquired if transferred from a current salmon charter license holder. In addition, the salmon charter license survives the death of the holder and may be transferred as personal property through inheritance.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Current salmon charter license holders may either renew their license each year, or notify the WDFW to hold their license for renewal the following year. According to the WDFW, there were 141 salmon charter licenses in 2006.

There is an annual fee of \$685 for nonresidents and \$380 for residents. Both residents and nonresidents are subject to a \$100 salmon enhancement surcharge as well.

A charter boat licensed in Oregon may fish in designated Washington waters without a Washington license, but are subject to Oregon's own fishing quotas. Recreational fishers must have a recreational license to fish for albacore tuna.

Summary of Bill:

The operator of a charter boat wishing to fish for albacore tuna must acquire a salmon charter license.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill follows up on the tuna measure from last year, and should be viewed as a technical matter to ensure consistency with recreational fishing of albacore tuna. Recreational albacore tuna has been a major fishery on the Washington coast for many decades. The North Pacific stock of albacore is being exploited by Pacific Rim nations. The international forum asked member nations to put a cap on albacore fishing efforts at current levels, and this bill implements that request. Non-salmon charter licenses have not been used for albacore tuna fishing in the past.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Blake, prime sponsor; Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries; Mark Cedargreen, Westport Charter Boat Association; and Michele Culver, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.