

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1351

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to license fees for national guard members under Title 77 RCW.

Brief Description: Concerning license fees for national guard members under Title 77 RCW.

Sponsors: House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Blake, Harris, DeBolt and Stanford).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/27/15, 2/4/15 [DPS];

General Government & Information Technology: 2/8/16 [DPS(AGNR-A GGIT)].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/17/16, 97-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 3/3/16, 48-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Requires the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to issue three types of recreational hunting licenses to resident full-time members of the Washington State Guard and National Guard at no charge.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources be substituted therefor and the substitute bill as amended by Committee on General Government & Information Technology do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; MacEwen, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Johnson, Morris and Senn.

Staff: Dan Jones (786-7118).

Background:

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.

Introduction to Fishing and Hunting Licenses.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is responsible for issuing hunting and fishing licenses at fees that are set in statute for each license type. These fees generally are a set amount for an adult state resident, an elevated rate for a non-state resident, and a reduced rate for a youth participant. Reduced rate licenses are also available to individuals with certain disabilities and certain veterans.

Reduced Rate Licenses.

Residents. To qualify for a reduced rate license (the fee set for a youth license), a Washington resident must satisfy one of the following criteria:

- be an honorably discharged veteran who is at least 65 years old and who has a service-related disability of any kind;
- be an honorably discharged veteran of any age who has a 30 percent or greater service-related disability; or
- have, regardless of military service, a developmental disability, or a disability that results in the permanent use of a wheelchair, blindness, or another visual impairment.

Non-Residents. To qualify for a reduced rate license (the fee set for a resident license), a non-Washington resident must be an honorably discharged veteran who is either 65 years old with a service-related disability or who has a 30 percent or greater service-related disability of any kind. Additionally, active duty military personnel serving in any branch of the United States Armed Forces qualify for a combination fishing license at the fee set for a resident license.

Types of Licenses.

Various licenses, permits, and tags are required to fish or hunt for specific types of fish and wildlife and at specific times of the year. The following are types of recreational fishing and hunting licenses that the WDFW issues:

- small game hunting license;
- supplemental migratory bird permit;
- big game hunting license;
- special hunting season permit (fee to enter drawing to receive a permit);
- disabled hunter permit;
- primary turkey tag and additional turkey tags;
- western Washington pheasant permit;
- personal use fishing license (freshwater, saltwater, or combination license);
- group fishing permit;
- shellfish and seaweed license;
- razor clam license; and
- scientific permit.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:

Upon written application and verification by the WDFW, the following recreational hunting licenses must be issued at no cost to a resident member of the Washington State Guard or National Guard, as long as the Washington State Guard or National Guard member is an active full-time Washington State Guard or National Guard employee:

- a small game hunting license;

- a supplemental migratory bird permit; and
- a big game hunting license.

The WDFW must provide notice of the effective date of the act by June 30, 2017, to affected parties, the Office of Financial Management, the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Senate, the Office of the Code Reviser, and other as deemed appropriate by the WDFW.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S):

The Senate amendment removes contingent effective date language and provides eligibility for the cost-free hunting licenses under the bill to a State or National Guard member who participates in drill training on a part-time basis.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on the date that the Department of Fish and Wildlife updates the WILD system, but not sooner than 90 days after the end of the legislative session in which it was enacted.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill would add Washington to the more than 15 other states that provide state incentives to those serving in the National Guard. High turnover in the National Guard is costly, and this bill would have a meaningful impact on recruitment and retention. The bill would allow the National Guard to offer something that other public safety organizations cannot. The incentives provided in this bill would recognize the service that National Guard members provide in this state and overseas, as well as the time members spend away from loved ones.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Daniel Dent and Matthew Ivy, National Guard Association of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.