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**Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Committee**

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**SB 5464**

**Brief Description:** Concerning unlawfully engaging in fishing guide activity.

**Sponsors:** Senators Warnick, Hatfield, Parlette, Hargrove, Ranker, Hewitt, Fraser and Chase; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Creates the crime of Unlawfully Engaging in Fishing Guide Activity, which makes punishable as a gross misdemeanor the failure of a holder of certain licenses to perform any duty related to catch record cards or to violate any rule regarding temporary fishing licenses, charter stamps, or catch record cards.

**Hearing Date:** 3/12/15

**Staff:** Peter Clodfelter (786-7127).

**Background:**

Fish Guide and Charter Boat Licenses.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) manages the harvest of fish and the licensing of fishers. A commercial license is required to act as a food fish or game fish guide. In general, the term guide refers to a person who accepts compensation while transporting or accompanying fishers and sharing techniques and expertise of the fish and waters.

There are two classes of fish guide licenses. A game fish guide license allows guide services related to game fish such as steelhead, bass, and catfish. A food fish guide license allows guide services related to food fish in most freshwater areas. Food fish include salmon, sturgeon, halibut, bottomfish, and tuna. A charter boat license is required to operate a vessel for a fee, in areas where others fish for food fish or shellfish in Puget Sound, Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay, Pacific Ocean waters, Lake Washington, or the Columbia River below the bridge at Longview.

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Acting as a fish guide or operating a charter boat without the proper license is a gross misdemeanor.

Catch Record Cards.

In general, a catch record card for recreational fish must be submitted to the WDFW by April 30 each year, whether or not fish were caught. The first catch record card is free; each subsequent catch record card is \$11. Catch record cards may be obtained from licensed dealers or by charter boat or guide operators. Charter boat or guide operators issuing temporary short-term charter stamp licenses are required to affix the stamp to each catch record card issued before fishing begins. Catch record cards affixed with a temporary stamp are valid for one day.

**Summary of Bill:**

A new gross misdemeanor is created for people who hold a game fish guide license, a food fish guide license, or a charter boat license and who fail to perform any duty related to catch record cards or who violate any rule regarding temporary fishing licenses, charter stamps, or catch record cards.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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