

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5464

As of January 29, 2015

Title: An act relating to unlawfully engaging in fishing guide activity.

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 History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 1/29/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Bonnie Kim (786-7316)

Background: Licensing. A commercial license is required to act as a food fish or game fish guide, i.e. persons paid to transport or accompany fishers and share their techniques and expertise. A game fish guide license permits services relating to game fish, e.g. steelhead, bass, and catfish. A food fish guide license permits services relating to food fish, e.g. salmon, sturgeon, halibut, bottomfish, and tuna, in most freshwater areas.

A charter boat license is required to operate a vessel for a fee in areas where others fish for food fish or shellfish in the Puget Sound, Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay, the Pacific Ocean, Lake Washington, and the Columbia river below the bridge at Longview.

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 Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife by April 30 each year, whether or not fish were caught. Fish guides or charter boat operators who issue a short-term license, known as a stamp, for a trip must affix the stamp to each card before fishing occurs. Catch record cards affixed with a temporary stamp are valid for one day.

Summary of Bill: A person is guilty of unlawfully engaging in fishing guide activity if the person holds a game fish guide, food fish guide, or charter boat operator license and either:

- fails to adhere to statutory requirements for catch record cards; or

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.

- violates any rule regarding the sale, possession, issuance, or reporting of temporary fishing licenses, temporary short-term charter stamps, or catch record cards.

Unlawfully engaging in fishing guide activity is a gross misdemeanor.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: An overwhelming number of charter boat operators and fish guides follow the law. This bill addresses several enforcement and prosecution issues in current statutes discovered by an investigation. This bill is supported by the industry.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Warnick, prime sponsor; Erik Olson, WDFW Police.