

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6317

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As of January 23, 2018

**Title:** An act relating to increasing commercial fishing license fees for nonresidents.

**Brief Description:** Increasing commercial fishing license fees for nonresidents.

**Sponsors:** Senators Van De Wege, King, Rivers, Takko, Hasegawa and Saldaña; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 1/22/18.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increases fees for nonresident commercial fishing, dealing, and delivery licenses.</li><li>• Reduces resident fees for fish guide licenses.</li></ul>
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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

**Staff:** Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

**Background:** Role of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). DFW serves as manager of the state's fish and wildlife resources. Among other duties, DFW must protect and manage fish and wildlife, including establishing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife.

Commercial Fishery Licensing. DFW manages the commercial harvest of fish and shellfish. Commercial fishers, and fish buyers and dealers, must obtain applicable licenses from DFW. In general, commercial fishing license fees are structured by species and fishing gear. There is a resident and nonresident fee for each license type.

2017 Commercial Licensing Bill. In 2017, the Legislature passed a bill making a number of changes to commercial licensing including:

- modifying many license fees, generally increasing resident fees and adjusting non-resident fees to \$75 more than the resident fee;

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- creating a new licensing structure for buying and selling commercially caught fish; and
- providing enforcement and recordkeeping requirements for the new licensing structure.

**Summary of Bill:** Nonresident fees for commercial fishing, dealing, and delivery licenses are generally increased to establish a fee differential of \$385 between each resident and nonresident license. Examples of specific changes include the following:

- salmon charter license—from \$535 to \$845 for nonresidents;
- Puget sound gillnet—from \$455 to \$765 for nonresidents; and
- salmon delivery license—from \$505 to \$815 for nonresidents.

Additionally, resident fees for fishing guide licenses are reduced. The resident food fish guide license is decreased from \$280 to \$210, and resident game fish guide license is decreased from \$410 to \$305. These changes result in a \$385 fee differential between resident and nonresident fees.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on January 1, 2019.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: DFW brought a 2017 request bill to raise revenue to support management of commercial fisheries. The initial proposal eliminated the nonresident fee differential due to a federal court case, but there is now appellate court guidance providing a formula that supports a \$385 fee differential. This bill adjusts commercial fee levels to that number, and also adjusts resident fish guide licenses based on input received over the interim. The 2017 bill took a great deal of work from stakeholders, and shows the willingness of the industry to help fund DFW. These are a few modifications to last year's effort.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Kevin Van De Wege, Prime Sponsor; Tom Echols, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries; Nate Pamplin, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.