
HOUSE BILL 1174

State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session

By Representatives Muri, J. Walsh, and Shea

Read first time 01/12/17. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to an elective firearms safety and hunter
2 education course for high school students; amending RCW 77.32.155;
3 and adding a new section to chapter 28A.230 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1)(a) The superintendent of public instruction, in consultation
8 with the department of fish and wildlife, must develop a program of
9 instruction for firearms safety and hunter education for students in
10 grades nine through twelve that satisfies the hunting license
11 prerequisite requirements of RCW 77.32.155. The program of
12 instruction must be developed according to a schedule that provides
13 school districts with sufficient time to adopt the program for the
14 2018-19 school year. In developing the program of instruction, the
15 superintendent of public instruction should seek partnerships with
16 public and private entities for the purpose of minimizing costs
17 associated with its development and implementation.

18 (b) The program of instruction must include a firearms safety and
19 hunter education component, and a civics component that examines the
20 Constitution of the United States with an emphasis on the Bill of
21 Rights. The academic rigor of the civics component must exceed that

1 of the compulsory study requirements established in RCW 28A.230.170
2 for the Constitution of the United States.

3 (2)(a) Beginning with the 2018-19 school year, any school
4 district may adopt the program developed under this section as an
5 elective one-half credit course to instruct students in grades nine
6 through twelve, or grades ten through twelve if grade nine is not
7 offered at the high school, in the content area addressed by the
8 curriculum. To the extent practicable, the firearms safety and hunter
9 education component of the program must be taught:

10 (i) By hunter education instructors authorized by the department
11 of fish and wildlife under RCW 77.32.155; and

12 (ii) At a local firearms range selected by the applicable school
13 district that has elected to make its facilities, property, or both
14 available to students either free of charge or at a reduced rate.

15 (b) A school district may provide additional instruction that
16 supplements the program developed under this section.

17 (c) School districts adopting the program developed under this
18 section are encouraged to seek partnerships with public and private
19 entities for the purpose of minimizing costs to students
20 participating in a firearms safety and hunter education course.

21 **Sec. 2.** RCW 77.32.155 and 2013 c 23 s 243 are each amended to
22 read as follows:

23 (1)(a) When purchasing any hunting license, persons under the age
24 of eighteen shall present certification of completion of a course of
25 instruction of at least ten hours in the safe handling of firearms,
26 safety, conservation, and sporting/hunting behavior. All persons
27 purchasing any hunting license for the first time, if born after
28 January 1, 1972, shall present such certification.

29 (b)(i) The director may establish a program for training persons
30 in the safe handling of firearms, conservation, and sporting/hunting
31 behavior and shall prescribe the type of instruction and the
32 qualifications of the instructors. The director shall, as part of
33 establishing the training program, exempt members of the United
34 States military from the firearms skills portion of any instruction
35 course completed over the internet.

36 (ii) The director may cooperate with the national rifle
37 association, organized sports/outdoor enthusiasts' groups, or other
38 public or private organizations when establishing the training
39 program.

1 (iii) The director may cooperate and partner with the
2 superintendent of public instruction and school districts in their
3 implementation of section 1 of this act and the provision of hunter
4 education training opportunities offered as part of the public school
5 curriculum.

6 (c) Upon the successful completion of a course established under
7 this section, the trainee shall receive a hunter education
8 certificate signed by an authorized instructor. The certificate is
9 evidence of compliance with this section.

10 (d) The director may accept certificates from other states that
11 persons have successfully completed firearm safety, hunter education,
12 or similar courses as evidence of compliance with this section.

13 (2)(a) The director may authorize a once in a lifetime, one
14 license year deferral of hunter education training for individuals
15 who are accompanied by a nondeferred Washington-licensed hunter who
16 has held a Washington hunting license for the prior three years and
17 is over eighteen years of age. The commission shall adopt rules for
18 the administration of this subsection to avoid potential fraud and
19 abuse.

20 (b) The director is authorized to collect an application fee, not
21 to exceed twenty dollars, for obtaining the once in a lifetime, one
22 license year deferral of hunter education training from the
23 department. This fee must be deposited into the fish and wildlife
24 enforcement reward account and must be used exclusively to administer
25 the deferral program created in this subsection.

26 (c) For the purposes of this subsection, "accompanied" means to
27 go along with another person while staying within a range of the
28 other person that permits continual unaided visual and auditory
29 communication.

30 (3) To encourage the participation of an adequate number of
31 instructors for the training program, the commission shall develop
32 nonmonetary incentives available to individuals who commit to serving
33 as an instructor. The incentives may include additional hunting
34 opportunities for instructors.

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