

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1769

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources

**Title:** An act relating to a vessel crewmember license.

**Brief Description:** Concerning a vessel crewmember license.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Blake, Chandler and Dent.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Rural Development, Agriculture, & Natural Resources: 2/15/19, 2/22/19 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Authorizes the Fish and Wildlife Commission to adopt fishery-specific rules regarding commercial fishing crewmember licenses.
- Requires crewmember license holders to carry identification.
- Provides that an individual who is prohibited from obtaining a crewmember license may not be covered by a "John Doe" crewmember license held by a commercial fishing license holder.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURE, & NATURAL RESOURCES

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Shewmake, Vice Chair; Dent, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chapman, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Kretz, Lekanoff, Orcutt, Pettigrew, Ramos, Schmick, Springer and Walsh.

**Staff:** Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

**Background:**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) manages the commercial harvest of food fish, shellfish, and salmon. Commercial fishers must obtain applicable licenses from the DFW. In

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general, commercial fishing license fees are structured by species and fishing technique. Crewmembers of commercial fishing vessels must obtain a crewmember license. A commercial fishing license holder may purchase up to two crewmember licenses for any individual working on the vessel named on the commercial fishing license. Each such crewmember license covers one crewmember per trip. Immediate family members, including spouses, children, or grandchildren, of a person who holds a commercial fishing license are exempt from the crewmember licensing requirement.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The Fish and Wildlife Commission may adopt fishery-specific rules to increase the number of commercial fishing crewmember licenses that may be held by a commercial fishing license holder and that pertain to the issuance, validity, use, possession, and display of the license.

Individuals required to have a crewmember license must carry at least one piece of identification that contains their photograph and signature. A crewmember license held by a commercial fishing license holder may not be used to cover an individual who is prohibited from obtaining a crewmember license.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill adds a provision specifying that a "John Doe" crewmember license held by a commercial fishing license holder may not be used to cover an individual who is prohibited from obtaining a crewmember license.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The industry brought this idea forward for discussion. The Legislature created the crewmember license in 2017, which is a license required for all crewmembers on commercial fishing vessels. A commercial fishing license holder may hold up to two crewmember licenses, known as "John Doe" licenses, that each cover one deckhand that does not otherwise have a license for one trip. Some larger vessels that participate in particular fisheries can have more than two crewmembers, so having two John Doe licenses is often not enough. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) suggested the requirement that crewmember license holders carry identification. This bill aligns Washington law with Oregon law, as Oregon does not have a crewmember license limit.

(Opposed)

(Other) The DFW signed in as "other," but supports this bill. Crewmember licenses may be purchased through the Washington Interactive Licensing Database (WILD) system either by potential crewmembers or as add-ons to commercial fishing licenses. While the WILD system can meet the need, John Doe licenses provide an opportunity for those crewmembers who may be able to purchase a license through the WILD system. The DFW suggests an amendment to specify that a crewmember with a suspended license may not be covered by a John Doe license.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Blake, prime sponsor; and Tom Echols, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries.

(Other) Nate Pamplin, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.