

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1431

As Reported by House Committee On:

Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to encouraging youth participation in fishing and shellfishing.

Brief Description: Encouraging youth participation in fishing and shellfishing.

Sponsors: Representatives Rule, Taylor, Sutherland, Mosbrucker, Lovick, Johnson, J., Ortiz-Self, Simmons, Peterson, Shewmake, Barkis, Ryu, Ramel, Riccelli, Hackney and Dufault.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/5/21, 2/10/21 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates a grant program and associated account to assist certain organizations establish fishing gear rental systems.
- Increases the youth age for the purpose of fishing licenses to 16 years old.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Chapman, Chair; Shewmake, Vice Chair; Dent, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fitzgibbon, Klicker, Kloba, Lekanoff, Morgan, Orcutt, Ramos and Springer.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Kretz, McEntire and Schmick.

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

Fishing Licenses.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is responsible for the management of the state's fish and wildlife resources and establishes basic rules and regulations governing the time, place, manner, and methods used to harvest or enjoy fish and wildlife. As a part of this responsibility, the Department issues licenses for fishing in Washington. Categories of fishing licenses include freshwater licenses, saltwater licenses, and combination licenses, and all individuals age 15 and over who wish to fish in Washington must obtain a license from the Department. There are several endorsements, stamps, permits, or other surcharges required for particular activities in addition to a fishing license. Fee amounts for fishing licenses, stamps, permits, and endorsements are set in statute, and are as follows:

License Type	Youth (age 15)	Resident	Nonresident	Resident Senior age 70+
Combination license: Fish, Shellfish, and Seaweed	\$5	\$45	\$108	\$45
Saltwater	(must purchase combo)	\$25	\$52	\$5
Freshwater	(must purchase combo)	\$25	\$75	\$5
1-Day Combination	(must purchase combo)	\$8	\$16	\$8
3-Day Combination	(must purchase annual)	\$15	\$30	\$15
Shellfish/Seaweed	\$10	\$10	\$27	\$5
2-Pole Endorsement	\$13	\$13	\$13	\$5
Puget Sound Dungeness Annual	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50	\$7.50
Puget Sound Dungeness Temporary	\$3	\$3	\$3	\$3
Razor Clam	(must purchase combo)	\$8	\$15	\$8
3-Day Razor Clam	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5

In addition to the fees established in statute, the Department also charges a transaction fee of 10 percent on all licenses issued through the automated licensing system, and there is a 5 cents surcharge on freshwater, saltwater, and annual and temporary combination licenses to be deposited in the Rockfish Research Account.

Although individuals under age 15 are not required to purchase fishing licenses, in order to fish for salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, or Puget Sound Dungeness crab, they must hold a catch record card and, if applicable, a Puget Sound Dungeness crab endorsement. There is no charge for the first catch record card. Subsequent catch record cards are \$11 each.

The Recreation and Conservation Office.

The Recreation and Conservation Office administers several grant programs for numerous boards and councils to create outdoor recreational opportunities, protect the state's wildlife habitat and farmland, and assist salmon recovery efforts.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Youth Fishing Opportunities Grant Program (Program) is created with an associated account. The Recreation and Conservation Office is responsible for administering the Program. Grant funds may be distributed to certain organizations, such as Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups, local parks and recreation districts, or Boys and Girls Clubs or other similar youth organizations, to establish fishing equipment rental systems. Funds in the account may be spent only after appropriation, and the account may receive gifts, grants, and donations.

The youth age for the purposes of fishing licenses is changed from age 15 to age 16. As a result, individuals aged 15 are no longer required to purchase fishing licenses, and individuals aged 16 qualify for the youth combination fishing license rate.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Changes the youth age for the purposes of purchasing fishing licenses age from 19 to 16. Requires individuals age 16 and over, instead of age 15 and over, to hold a personal use shellfish and seaweed license.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 10, 2021.

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) Fishing is an experience that can teach important lessons and build family relationships. All youth should be able to have the opportunity to have this experience. At the same time, equipment and license fees can be expensive. The goal of this bill is to improve access to fishing opportunities by reducing some financial barriers.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is generally supportive of efforts to increase youth participation in fishing. It is often an activity where expertise is passed on through generations. However, the Department also manages several other youth programs and opportunities including a youth donation account, and No Child Left Inside. Additionally, there is a youth license for people at age 15. Increasing the age to 19 will result in a loss of revenue of about \$3 million. There may be an opportunity to amend the bill to raise the youth age to 16. This grant program would fit nicely in the mission of the Recreation and Conservation Office; however, there is concern about how the grant would be funded and funding is not included in the Governor's budget. Currently, the account may receive gifts, grants, or donations, but otherwise there is not a funding source specified.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Rule, prime sponsor.

(Other) Nate Pamplin, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; and Kaleen Cottingham, Recreation and Conservation Office.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.