

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5017

As Reported By House Committee On:
Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to commercial fishery licenses.

Brief Description: Establishing commercial fishery license fee and renewal provisions for years with no fishing season.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Senator Snyder).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 3/21/95, 3/28/95 [DPA].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Fuhrman, Chairman; Buck, Vice Chairman; Pennington, Vice Chairman; Basich, Ranking Minority Member; Regala, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Beeksma; Cairnes; Elliot; Fisher; Jacobsen; Romero; Sheldon; Stevens; B. Thomas and Thompson.

Staff: Rick Anderson (786-7114).

Background: The Department of Fish and Wildlife does not have express statutory authority to waive license fees in the event that the department does not allow a commercial fishing season.

In 1994, the department completely closed the commercial ocean salmon troll fishery. The department has also closed the commercial fishery for Puget Sound whiting for several years. Both of these fisheries are limited entry.

Many limited entry fisheries have license requirements that must be met in order to remain eligible a for a license. Examples of license requirements include minimum landings or a poundage requirement.

Summary of Amended Bill: If the Department of Fish and Wildlife completely closes a commercial fishing season, the department must either waive the requirement to obtain a license or refund license fees that have already been paid.

The department must waive landing, poundage, and other license requirements if no harvest opportunity occurs during the fishing season. Future eligibility for a license is not affected by having these requirements waived.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The amended bill waives the fee by waiving the requirement to obtain a license, and makes other technical changes.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Charter boats shouldn't have to pay a \$500 license fee if there is no season. Commercial fishers should have the option of participating in a fishery if that fishery is marginal.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Mark Cedengrern, Westport Charter Association; Roger Attwood, Washington Trollers Association; and Cyreis Schnitt; WDFW (all in favor).