

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2149

As Reported By House Committee On:
Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to removing landing requirements for the Puget Sound commercial crab fishery and allowing two licensees to operate one vessel.

Brief Description: Modifying licensing provisions for a dungeness crab--Puget Sound fishery license.

Sponsors: Representatives Linville, Buck, Regala, Gardner, Kessler and Anderson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 3/4/97, 3/5/97 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander; Anderson; Chandler; Hatfield; Pennington and Sheldon.

Staff: Rick Anderson (786-7114).

Background: The Puget Sound Dungeness crab fishery is subject to limited entry requirements. To renew a Dungeness crab Puget Sound license, a person must have held the license during the prior year and have harvested at least 1,000 pounds of crab in the fishery over the past two seasons.

Rules adopted by the Department of Fish and Wildlife restrict the total number of pots fished from a vessel to 100 when fishing for Dungeness crab in Puget Sound. This provision applies regardless of the number of license-holders on the vessel.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The catch requirements for renewing a Puget Sound Dungeness crab license are eliminated. A person who has two Dungeness crab Puget Sound licenses may operate the licenses if the vessel owner or alternate operator is on board the vessel. The department owner must allow a license-holder to operate up to 100 crab pots for each license.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill clarifies the circumstances under which more than 100 crab pots can be used on a vessel.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: This bill will help alleviate some of the fishing pressure on the Puget Sound Dungeness crab fishery. Some license-holders fish for crabs only to maintain their licenses. Eliminating catch requirements as a condition of renewing a license will reduce part of the incentive to fish.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Kelli Linville, prime sponsor; Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries (all in favor).