

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5508

As Passed House - Amended:

April 12, 1999

Title: An act relating to catch record card requirements for recreational crab fishers.

Brief Description: Increasing harvest data accuracy for the recreational crab fishery.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senators Spanel, Oke, Snyder, Jacobsen, Rossi and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 3/24/99, 4/2/99 [DPA];

Appropriations: 4/5/99 [DPA(APP w/o NR)s].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 4/12/99, 89-5.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill (As Amended by House Committee)

- Requires the use of crab catch record cards for the recreational harvest of crab.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Buck, Republican Co-Chair; Regala, Democratic Co-Chair; Anderson, Democratic Vice Chair; Sump, Republican Vice Chair; G. Chandler; Clements; Doumit; Eickmeyer; Ericksen; Pennington; Rockefeller and Stensen.

Staff: Carole Richmond (786-7114)

Background:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife currently requires catch record cards of salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, and halibut recreational fishers. Catch record cards are utilized as a means of recording each fish caught and providing catch data to the department at the

end of the license year. Catch record cards are not currently required in the recreational shellfish fishery.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Recreational crab fishers are required to possess a crab catch record card and immediately enter harvest data when dungeness crab are caught. The Fish and Wildlife Commission must develop rules for the administration of the crab catch record card.

Data from crab catch record cards must be utilized in preparing catch reports and in catch-sharing negotiations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill states that it takes effect on July 15, 1999. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: (Natural Resources) We don't have good harvest data on which to base allocation decisions under the Rafidie court decision that requires available shellfish to be allocated evenly between tribal and non-tribal fishers. The state needs to make sure it has its house in order so that it can defend its numbers. Current estimates are inflated. Data from catch record cards will increase the accuracy of our harvest estimates.

(with concerns) The department doesn't have the resources to implement this program. Funding is required.

(Appropriations) This provides a useful tool the agency can use to monitor crab populations.

Testimony Against: (Natural Resources) (Natural Resources) None.

(Appropriations) None.

Testified: (Natural Resources) Senator Harriet Spanel; Morris Barker, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; and Tom Burton, Puget Sound Crab Association.

(Appropriations) Morris Barker, Department of Fish and Wildlife.