

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5846

As of February 17, 1995

Title: An act relating to crab taken in offshore waters.

Brief Description: Revising regulation of crab taken in offshore waters.

Sponsors: Senator Snyder.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources: 2/21/95.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Staff: Erika Lim (786-7488)

Background: As of January 1, 1995, persons fishing for coastal crab in Washington State waters must have either a coastal crab or coastal crab class B fishery license. To qualify for a coastal crab license, a person must have made certain minimum landings into Washington during at least two of four designated qualifying seasons, and held one of an enumerated list of Washington licenses during specified years. Alternatively, a person may qualify by demonstrating a minimum number of landings during specified periods. A coastal crab fishery license is transferable and is subject to a transfer fee. A person who does not qualify for a coastal crab fishery license may qualify for a coastal crab class B license if that person can prove certain minimum landings into Washington during at least one of the designated qualifying seasons, and held one of an enumerated list of Washington fishery licenses every year since the year of the qualifying landing. Coastal crab class B licenses are not transferable and cease to exist after December 31, 1999. Both types of coastal crab licenses have hull length restrictions.

As of January 1, 1995, coastal crab taken in offshore waters (i.e., waters beyond the three-mile territorial waters) may be landed into Washington only if: (1) they were caught by persons holding either type of coastal crab fishery license; (2) they were caught by persons holding Oregon or California commercial crab fishing licenses, were caught during certain times of the year, and were caught using specified gear; or (3) the director determines that landings into Washington by non-possessors of either type of coastal crab license is in the best interest of the coastal crab processing industry and certain conditions are met.

As of January 1, 1995, an Oregon resident is eligible for coastal crab license if: the person: made certain minimum landings into Oregon during at least two of four designated qualifying seasons; the person held a nonresident non-Puget Sound crab pot license during certain years; and the state of Oregon grants reciprocal access to its territorial waters to Washington crab fishers.

As of January 1, 1995, a person who holds a coastal crab license may not land into Washington crab taken from the exclusive economic zones of Oregon or California unless

that person also holds the license or permit required to land those crab into the state from whose exclusive economic zone the crab were taken.

A review board hears cases involving decisions made by the department regarding either type of coastal crab license. The board has three members: a person representing commercial crab processors, a person who holds a coastal crab license, and a citizen of a coastal community.

Summary of Bill: Seasonal restrictions on persons holding Oregon or California crab fishing licenses who wish to land offshore crab into Washington are removed. However, single crab pots with individual floats must be used. The director does not have discretion to permit Washington landing of offshore crab by persons without a coastal-crab license or a coastal-crab class B license.

Coastal-crab fishery licenses are not subject to transfer fees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 15, 1995.

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