

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2526

As of February 24, 2016

Title: An act relating to reducing the number of days that a person must maintain a permanent place of abode in Washington before qualifying as a state resident for the purposes of Title 77 RCW.

Brief Description: Reducing the number of days that a person must maintain a permanent place of abode in Washington before qualifying as a state resident for the purposes of Title 77 RCW.

Sponsors: Representatives McCaslin, Blake, Buys, Muri, Griffey, Goodman, Hargrove, Reykdal, Gregerson, Klippert, Kilduff, Hayes, Van De Wege, Shea and Stanford.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/17/16, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 2/24/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Bonnie Kim (786-7316)

Background: The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is responsible for issuing hunting and fishing licenses at fees that are set in statute for each license type. License fees are generally divided into rates for an adult state resident, an elevated rate for a non-state resident, and a reduced rate for youth or seniors. Reduced-rate licenses are also available to individuals with certain disabilities and to certain veterans.

To qualify as a state resident for WDFW license purposes, a person must have maintained a permanent place of residence within the state for at least 90 days immediately before applying. Individuals licensed to hunt or fish as a resident in another state or country, or receiving resident benefits of another state or country, do not qualify as state residents. A person must also establish, by formal evidence, intent to continue residing in the state.

There are a number of ways to demonstrate permanent residency in the state, including:

- the use of a Washington address for federal or state tax purposes;
- designation of Washington as the person's residence for obtaining eligibility to hold public office or for judicial actions;
- demonstrating the person is a registered voter in Washington; or

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- demonstrating the person is a custodial parent with a child attending prekindergarten, kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, or high school in Washington.

A person can demonstrate intent to continue residing in Washington if they have:

- a valid Washington driver's license or identification card; or
- registered a vehicle in Washington.

Members of the United States Armed Forces qualify for resident license rates without meeting the 90-day requirement if they are temporarily stationed in Washington on pre-deployment orders or they are active duty non-retired members permanently stationed in Washington. A copy of the member's military orders, state of legal residence certificate, or enlistment or reenlistment documents are required as proof of their status. Spouses and children of such military members also qualify as state residents.

Summary of Bill: The amount of time a person must permanently reside in the state to qualify for resident hunting and fishing license fees is changed from 90 days to 30 days.

WDFW may not refund or adjust the price of licenses purchased prior to April 1, 2017.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on April 1, 2017.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a common sense bill that reduces the cost for new Washington residents to get started in recreational activities right away. New residents only have to wait 30 days for driver's licenses. I believe that in the long run we will see an upturn in revenue. I moved to Oregon with the intent to return to Washington when I retired but when I returned and registered my vehicles, received a driver's license, and registered to vote, I learned I could not purchase a resident fishing license until I had lived here for 90 days. At-risk youth with parents who may not be able to afford the higher fees after just moving to the state may miss out on these great opportunities.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative McCaslin, Prime Sponsor; Richard Sergeant.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.