

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1079

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation, March 22, 2007

**Title:** An act relating to hunting and fishing license fees.

**Brief Description:** Merging fishing and hunting license fees for certain veterans and persons with disabilities.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Kretz, Blake, Upthegrove, Ormsby, O'Brien, Morrell, Conway, Haigh, Moeller, McCune and Simpson; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 1/29/07, 95-0.

**Committee Activity:** Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 3/21/07, 3/22/07 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Hargrove, Poulsen, Spanel, Stevens and Swecker.

**Staff:** Kim Johnson (786-7346)

**Background:** There are separate statutory sections that specify reduced fees and approved activities for hunting, fishing, and shellfish licenses for veterans, persons with disabilities, and other qualifying groups.

**Hunting Licenses:** A "youth" rate is available for honorably discharged veterans residing in the state that: (1) are at least 65 years old and have a service-connected disability; (2) have a 30 percent or more service-connected disability; or (3) are confined to a wheelchair.

**Fishing Licenses:** A five-dollar license is available to the following individuals: (1) honorably discharged veterans residing in the state with 30 percent or more service connected disabilities; (2) persons who are blind or visually impaired; (3) persons with developmental disabilities documented by a physician licensed to practice in the state; and (4) persons who are physically disabled and confined to wheelchairs.

**Shellfish Harvester Cards:** A designated harvester card is available to persons with disabilities. The card allows a companion to help a person with a disability to fish or harvest shellfish.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Group Fishing and Shellfish Harvesting Permits: Group permits may be issued to qualified outdoor education programs, state-operated facilities, and state-licensed nonprofit facilities or programs that care for the sick, elderly, and persons with physical or mental disabilities.

Respectful Language: In 2004, the Legislature directed the Code Reviser to avoid certain words used to describe persons with disabilities. For example, "individuals with disabilities" is to be used instead of "disabled."

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** Clarifying the Definition of "Person with a Disability": The statutory definition of "person with a disability" is changed to conform with the regulatory definition of the same term used by the Department of Fish and Wildlife when it issues licenses to hunters with disabilities. A substantive change is made: the regulatory requirement that a "person with disability" seeking a designated shellfish harvester card have a "significant limitation" in the use of upper or lower extremities is superseded by the new statutory definition requiring a "severe limitation."

Consolidating Statutory Sections: The reduced rates for hunting and fishing are consolidated into one statutory section. The following substantive changes are made: (1) the "honorably discharged" requirement is removed for veterans with a 30 percent or more service-related disability; (2) the eligibility for reduced-rate hunting licenses is expanded to include blind and visually impaired persons, persons who permanently use wheelchairs, and persons with developmental disabilities; however, a residency requirement is added for those same individuals; and (3) the requirement that a developmental disability be documented by a physician licensed to practice in this state is removed.

Using Respectful Language: Changes are made in the fish and wildlife code that conform with respectful language requirements.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED AMENDMENT(S) AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation):** The definition of persons with a disability is removed, and the Fish and Wildlife Commission is required to develop a definition for persons with a disability by rule.

The requirement that a veteran with a 30 percent disability be honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces in order to qualify for a reduced fee hunting and fish license is restored.

The requirement that a person with a developmental disability must have documentation of the disability by a licensed physician is restored.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: We're working on an amendment to address some technical issues with the language in the bill. The advisory group that serves the Director, made up of persons with disabilities, recommended that we consolidate the hunting

and fishing licenses for persons with disabilities under one section in the code. The bill also corrects the language throughout Title 77 to comply with respectful language requirements.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Tom Davis, Department of Fish and Wildlife.