

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1476

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

Title: An act relating to charter licenses.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions with regard to nonsalmon charter licenses.

Sponsors: Representatives Blake and Kretz.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/28/07, 97-0.

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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

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: A charter license is required from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) in order to operate a vessel where paying customers fish for shellfish or food fish. A salmon charter license is required to fish for salmon and shellfish. No new salmon charter licenses have been authorized for issuance since May 28, 1977. A salmon charter license can be acquired if transferred from a current salmon charter license holder. In addition, the salmon charter license survives the death of the holder and may be transferred as personal property through inheritance.

Current salmon charter license holders may either renew their license each year, or notify the DFW to hold their license for renewal the following year. According to the DFW, there were 141 salmon charter licenses in 2006.

There is an annual fee of \$685 for nonresidents and \$380 for residents. Both residents and nonresidents are subject to a \$100 salmon enhancement surcharge as well.

A charter boat licensed in Oregon may fish in designated Washington waters without a Washington license, but are subject to Oregon's own fishing quotas. Recreational fishers must have a recreational license to fish for albacore tuna.

Summary of Bill: The operator of a charter boat wishing to fish for albacore tuna must acquire a salmon charter license.

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.

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: This bill follows up on the tuna measure from last year, and should be viewed as a technical matter to ensure consistency with recreational fishing of albacore tuna. Recreational albacore tuna has been a major fishery on the Washington coast for many decades and we are concerned about its recent decline. The U.S. Government has made a commitment to an International Tuna Commission that the U.S. would not increase its efforts on tuna fishing. Commercial fleets are fully supportive of this measure. It is meant to prevent some future problems with over-fishing tuna. Non-salmon charter licenses have not been used for albacore tuna fishing in the past.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Blake, prime sponsor; Ed Owens, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries; Mark Cedargreen, Westport Charter Boat Association; Michele Culver, DFW.