

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1192

As Reported by House Committee On:
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to license fees under Title 77 RCW for veterans with disabilities.

Brief Description: Regarding license fees under Title 77 RCW for veterans with disabilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Short, Blake, Takko, Taylor, Kretz, Crouse, Springer, Chandler, Ryu and Morrell.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/30/13, 1/31/13 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows veterans with disabilities who are residents of other states to purchase hunting and fishing licenses at the reduced rates offered to veterans with disabilities who live in Washington.
- Provides discretionary authority to the existing advisory committee for the interests of hunters and fishers with disabilities to reach out to other states in an effort to promote the discounted opportunities for veterans with disabilities in Washington and collaborate with other states in an effort to encourage similar opportunities for Washington's veterans with disabilities when they hunt or fish in other states.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Blake, Chair; Lytton, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Dunshee, Haigh, Kretz, Orcutt, Pettigrew, Schmick, Stanford, Van De Wege and Warnick.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

Background:

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.

Discounted License Sales.

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. These fees generally have a set amount for an adult state resident, and then an elevated price for a non-state resident and a reduced price for a youth participant (under 15 years old for fishing; under 16 years old for hunting).

Reduced license prices are also available to certain individuals with disabilities. These individuals may receive a fishing license for \$5 and any of the various state hunting licenses for the price that is charged to a youth participant for that license.

To qualify for one of these reduced rates, the individual must be a Washington resident and satisfy one of the following criteria:

- be an honorably discharged veteran who is at least 65 years old and who has a service-related disability of any kind;
- be an honorably discharged veteran of any age and who has a 30 percent or greater service-related disability; or
- have, regardless of military service, a disability that results in the permanent use of a wheelchair; results in blindness or another visual impairment; or have a developmental disability.

Advisory Committee for the Interests of Hunters and Fishers with Disabilities.

The 2001 Legislature created an advisory committee to the Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) that generally represents the interests of hunters and fishers with disabilities. These interests include special hunts, modified sporting equipment, access to public lands, and increased hunting and fishing opportunities. The seven members of the advisory committee are appointed by the Commission and are comprised of individuals with disabilities representing the six WDFW administrative units, and one member appointed at large.

Summary of Bill:

The reduced hunting and fishing license prices available to honorably discharged Washington resident military veterans are extended to residents of other states. To qualify, the non-state resident hunter or fisher must satisfy the same requirements for a discounted rate that state residents must satisfy. These requirements are being an honorably discharged veteran of the United States armed forces and being either:

- age 65 or older with a service-related disability of any kind; or
- any age, with a 30 percent or greater service-related disability.

The members of the existing advisory committee for the interests of hunters and fishers with disabilities are given the discretionary authority to, in the course of their service, reach out to other states in an effort to promote the discounted opportunities for veterans with disabilities in Washington and collaborate with other states in an effort to encourage similar

opportunities for Washington's veterans with disabilities when they hunt or fish in other states.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Nonresident veterans with disabilities deserve the same showing of gratitude that we provide for state residents. Most veterans with disabilities are not able to enjoy Washington's hunting opportunities because of the high nonresident fees. Encouraging nonresident veterans with disabilities to visit Washington will not only say thank you to them, but also provide economic stimulus in rural eastern Washington communities.

The ultimate goal is have other states provide full reciprocity for Washington's veterans with disabilities.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Short, prime sponsor; Ted Wisorek and Dan Miller, Veterans Legislation Coalition; Stan Christie; and Brian Dangel, Ferry County.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.