

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1649

As Reported by House Committee On:

Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to the advisory committee on hunters and fishers with disabilities.

Brief Description: Concerning the advisory committee on hunters and fishers with disabilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Shewmake and Taylor; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources: 1/12/22, 1/25/22 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Specifies that the Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) may appoint up to two additional members who meet certain criteria to the Advisory Committee on Hunters and Fishers with Disabilities (Advisory Committee).
- Modifies the content and frequency of the report the Commission must submit to the Legislature about the Advisory Committee.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Chapman, Chair; Shewmake, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Dent, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fitzgibbon, Klicker, Kloba, Kretz, Lekanoff, McEntire, Morgan, Orcutt, Ramos, Schmick and Springer.

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

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

Background:

The Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) operate under a mandate to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage the fish, shellfish, and wildlife of the state. This responsibility includes authority to establish hunting and fishing seasons and limits in ways that do not impair fish and wildlife resources, and a duty to attempt to maximize the public recreational hunting and fishing opportunities for all citizens regardless of age or ability.

The Advisory Committee on Hunters and Fishers with Disabilities (Advisory Committee), also referred to as the Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Committee, was created by the Legislature as a pilot program in 2001 and made permanent in 2008. The Advisory Committee is composed of seven volunteer members, each an individual with a disability, representing one of the Department's six administrative regions and one at-large member.

At least once every four years, the Commission must provide a report to the appropriate legislative committees on the effectiveness of the Advisory Committee, including participation levels, general interest, quality of advice, and recommendations about the Advisory Committee's modification or continuance. The most recent report was completed in 2019 and the next report is due in 2023.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Commission may appoint up to two additional Committee members who can demonstrate experience working with disabled persons in a natural resource environment.

The requirement that the Commission report to the Legislature on the effectiveness of the Advisory Committee is modified. Instead of at least every four years, the Commission must report to the Legislature at least every two years, by December 1. The report must be concise and include levels of participation in hunting and fishing by persons with disabilities and recommendations to maintain accessibility for persons with disabilities. The requirement that the report cover general interest, quality of advice, and recommendations about the Advisory Committee's modification or continuance is removed.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill reinstates and modifies the requirement that the Commission report to the Legislature on the activities of the Advisory Committee as follows:

- increases the frequency of the report from at least once every four years, to at least once every two years;
- specifies that the report must be concise;
- narrows the scope of topics the report must include to levels of participation in hunting and fishing by persons with disabilities and recommendations to maintain

accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The Advisory Committee was created in 2005. The bill does not change the criteria to serve on the Advisory Committee. Instead, it allows for up to two additional members with demonstrable experience working with individuals with disabilities, including caregivers for example, to serve on the Advisory Committee. The bill also eliminates the preference list of disabilities to be eligible to serve on the Advisory Committee at the advice of the Department's human resources department. Regarding the elimination of the report, the Department believes the Advisory Committee is effective and should continue, which is why the bill deletes the report.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Tom McBride, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.