

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NUMBER: HB 1061 (First Edition)

SHORT TITLE: Disabled Sportsman Licenses

SPONSOR(S): Rep. McCombs

FISCAL IMPACT

Yes (X) No () No Estimate Available ()

FY 1997-98 FY 1998-99 FY 1999-00 FY 2000-01 FY 2001-02

REVENUES

Wildlife Endowment Fund					
Disabled Sportsman Licenses	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Disabled Hunting & Fishing Lic.	\$18,500	\$18,500	\$18,500	\$18,500	\$18,500
Wildlife Resources Fund	(\$13,875)	(\$13,875)	(\$13,875)	(\$13,875)	(\$13,875)

PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S) &

PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED: Wildlife Resources Commission

EFFECTIVE DATE: Section 5 of the bill becomes effective December 1, 1997. The remainder of the act is effective July 1, 1997.

BILL SUMMARY: This act creates a new Disabled Resident Sportsman License that entitles the license holder to lifetime hunting and fishing privileges including big game, game lands, waterfowl, and mountain trout. The new license sells for \$100 and the revenue earned from the license will be deposited into the Wildlife Endowment Fund. The act converts the Disabled Veteran Lifetime Combination Hunting and Fishing License and the Totally Disabled Resident Lifetime Combination Hunting and Fishing License into a Lifetime Combination Hunting and Fishing License for Disabled Residents. The fee for this license is increased from the current \$7.50 to \$10 and deposits the funds into the Wildlife Endowment Fund. The eligibility criteria for the new license is the same as the old licenses. The bill also adds a Class 3 misdemeanor to the statutes for persons who unlawfully use facilities provided to disabled sportsman by the Wildlife Resources Commission.

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY:

The Wildlife Resources Commission reported that 1,850 disabled person lifetime hunting and fishing licenses were sold at a price of \$7.50 in FY 1995-96. This included 195 Disabled Veterans and 1,655 Disabled Residents licenses. Beginning in FY 1997-98, disabled veterans and residents will pay \$10 for the same lifetime hunting and fishing license. The only differences are the 1) price, 2) the name - Lifetime Combination Hunting and Fishing License for Disabled Residents, and 3) the fund - revenues will be deposited into the Wildlife Endowment Fund. Assuming the same number of lifetime license applicants each year, the price increase will raise \$4,625 more revenue annually. Since the license proceeds are being transferred from the Wildlife Resources Fund to the Wildlife Endowment Fund, there will be loss of revenue in the agency's operating fund.

The bill also creates a new Disabled Resident Sportsman License for \$100. This license has the same eligibility criteria as the disabled hunting and fishing license, but offers access to waterfowl, trout, big game, and game lands. The agency believes that one half of the new disabled applicants applying for hunting and fishing licenses will opt for the new sportsman license. The agency also believes that one fourth of the current holders of disabled lifetime hunting and fishing licenses will also buy the new sportsman license. After discussions with state officials at Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the Governor's Advocacy Council for Persons with Disabilities, and the Division of Veteran Affairs, this memo assumes that the agency's assumptions are unfounded. Those persons knowledgeable about the disabled population believe most would choose the inexpensive license to hunt and fish over the more expensive sportsman license. The offer of big game, trout and waterfowl in the sportsman license is not attractive to a group limited by health and mobility concerns. This memo assumes that the disabled will buy the \$10 hunting and fishing license and not the \$100 sportsman license. For the few that may buy the sportsman license, no revenue is projected.

As for the misdemeanor in the bill, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) does not anticipate that it would have a substantial impact on the Judicial Department as there would not be any significant changes in how cases are processed or disposed. The AOC believes that the very few additional cases which may result from this bill could be absorbed within existing resources. Likewise, the bill would not have a significant fiscal impact on the Department of Correction.

FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION

733-4910

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