



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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MAKE BROOK TROUT STATE FISH

Senate Bill 333 as introduced
First Analysis (12-11-87)

Sponsor: Sen. Vernon Ehlers
Committee: State Affairs

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THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

The trout is designated as the state fish of Michigan. According to the Department of Natural Resources there are four species of trout found in this state—the brook, brown, rainbow, and lake. This has resulted in nonspecific depictions of the state fish showing parts from the various species. Although two of these species are native to the state—the brook and lake trout—the lake trout is found only in the Great Lakes while the brook trout is native to both the Great Lakes and many of the state's inland waters. Since the brook trout is native to a wider range of Michigan waters than other species, some believe it should be designated as Michigan's state fish, rather than just the "trout."

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would amend Public Act 58 of 1965 (which established the trout as the state fish for Michigan) to change the designation of the state fish from "trout" to "brook trout."

MCL 2.15

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The House Fiscal Agency reports the bill would have no fiscal implications to the state. (12-7-87)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The designation of the official state fish, in any other state, may not seem like a topic worthy of legislative concern. But in Michigan—where state revenues from fishing licenses alone amount to nearly \$20 million annually—a question over the state's official fish involves a large interested faction. Especially in its sesquicentennial year, when state tourism is at peak levels, the symbols our state has chosen to represent its unique character have even greater significance.

Currently, the trout is the state fish. Because of this broad designation, much confusion exists as to which trout, specifically, this refers. This bill would clarify the matter and extend visibility and promotional value to the state fish. The brook trout's beauty, its fighting spirit as a game fish, and its native relationship to many of this state's waters make it an ideal state symbol—not just for people who fish, but for everyone interested in this state's natural beauty.

POSITIONS:

The Department of Natural Resources supports the bill. (12-4-87)

The Lansing Chapter of Trout Unlimited supports the bill. (12-8-87)

S.B. 333 (12-11-87)