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SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

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Senate Bill 512 (as introduced 4-15-99)
Sponsor: Senator Don Koivisto
Committee: Hunting, Fishing and Forestry

Date Completed: 11-9-99

CONTENT

The bill would amend Part 435 (Hunting and Fishing Licensing) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to revise the description of a resident with a disability, other than blindness, who is eligible to purchase any senior hunting or fishing license under the Act. Currently, the Act refers to a resident who has been determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to be permanently and totally disabled and entitled to veteran benefits at the 100% rate. The bill would refer, instead, to "a resident who has a disability", as defined in Section 40102 (i.e., a determinable physical characteristic of an individual that may result from disease, injury, congenital condition of birth, or functional disorder).

MCL 324.43502 & 324.43537

Legislative Analyst: N. Nagata

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this bill cannot be determined; however, it would reduce restricted revenue collections and shift additional GF/GP revenue to the Department of Natural Resources.

Reduced-price Senior resident hunting and fishing permits now cost approximately \$5.20 for each permit purchased. Resident hunting and fishing permits now cost approximately \$13 per permit, though temporary and special hunt permits, such as those to hunt elk and waterfowl, vary in price. Hunting and fishing license fees are deposited in the Game and Fish Protection Fund for use by the Department of Natural Resources. Consequently, this bill would result in the loss of \$7.80 in Game and Fish revenue, on average, for each Senior rate hunting or fishing license purchased by disabled Michigan residents under the provisions outlined above.

The amount of Game and Fish revenue lost under this proposal cannot be determined, however, in order to purchase a reduced-rate Senior hunting or fishing license, a disabled Michigan veteran must now provide a letter from the Veterans Administration confirming that he or she is totally and permanently disabled and eligible for full veterans' benefits. However, under the terms of this bill, anyone who has a disability other than blindness, as defined by the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA), could purchase Senior rate hunting and fishing licenses.

The number of Michigan residents who would qualify, and apply for, Senior rate hunting and fishing licenses under this new provision is unknown. Consequently, the total loss in Game and Fish Protection Fund revenue cannot be estimated.

Though this bill would result in lower Game and Fish Fund collections, it would not reduce the revenue available to the Department of Natural Resources. The NREPA requires the Legislature to appropriate annually "from the general fund" an amount equal to the difference between actual collections from the sale of reduced-price Senior licenses, and hypothetical license fee collections in the absence of the Senior rate program. "The difference is the amount that would otherwise be collected, and shall be credited to the game and fish protection fund."

Therefore, this bill would first reduce the amount of Game and Fish Fund revenue available to the State and then increase GF/GP revenue for the Game and Fish Protection Fund, though the amount of this shift cannot

be determined.

Fiscal Analyst: P. Alderfer

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.