

Senate Fiscal Agency
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House Bill 4937 (as reported with amendment)
Sponsor: Representative Sue Tabor
House Committee: Conservation and Outdoor Recreation
Senate Committee: Hunting, Fishing and Forestry

Date Completed: 3-4-02

RATIONALE

Currently, if an individual is under 17 years of age, he or she may fish without a license, but is required to observe all fishing rules and regulations. A resident or nonresident 12 to 16 years of age, however, may purchase a junior voluntary all-species license for \$2. If a license is purchased, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) must provide a Michigan fishing patch to the licensee. Some people believe that purchasing and owning a fishing license instills pride in a child and creates an interest in the sport. It has been suggested that all children under 17 years of age, instead of just 12- to 16-year-olds, be given the opportunity to purchase a junior all-species fishing license.

CONTENT

The bill would amend Part 435 (Hunting and Fishing Licensing) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow all individuals under 17 years of age to obtain an all-species fishing license for \$2, and to take aquatic species without a license. In addition, the bill would delete a provision that requires the Department of Natural Resources to provide a Michigan fishing patch to the licensee if a license is purchased.

(The all-species fishing license entitles the licensee to take all species of aquatic species (any fish, reptile, amphibian, mollusk, aquatic insect, or crustacea or part thereof) as prescribed by law.)

MCL 324.43532

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

Owning a fishing license could instill pride in a young child and encourage early involvement and interest in the sport of fishing. Fishing can provide a fun and rewarding experience for all ages. The Department notes that according to researchers at Michigan State University and elsewhere, 45% of Michigan's most involved and most active anglers reported that their first fishing experience occurred before age 5. Further, the quality of the earliest experiences appears to be very important in relation to long-term commitment to the sport of fishing.

Supporting Argument

By deleting the requirement that the DNR provide a Michigan fishing patch to each junior all-species fishing licensee, the bill would relieve the Department of the costs of processing and issuing the fishing patches. According to the DNR, only about 1,000 children registered for a license in 2000. At only \$2 for each license, the Department produces the patches at a financial loss.

Legislative Analyst: Nobuko Nagata

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would result in a nominal increase in State revenues. The increase in revenue from the sale of youth all-species fishing licenses would be offset somewhat by the costs of processing the license.

Fiscal Analyst: Pam Graham

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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.