

Legislative Analysis



CAPTURE OF LIVE RAPTORS FOR FALCONRY

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House Bill 5697 without amendment
Sponsor: Rep. Dave Hildenbrand

House Bill 5983 (Substitute H-1)
Sponsor: Rep. Kate Ebli
Committee: Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Natural Resources

Complete to 4-24-08

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 5697 & 5983 AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE

Section 40107a of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA), directs the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to issue an order regulating the capture of specified live raptors from private land for use in falconry. When originally enacted in 1998, the law was due to sunset after five years. It is currently set to expire on January 4, 2009. This law also directs the falconry order to prohibit the capture of more than a total of 25 raptors of specified types for use in falconry.

House Bill 5697 would eliminate the January 4, 2009 sunset provision.

House Bill 5983 would eliminate the statutory limit of 25 (in any combination) on the number of specified raptors (live red-tailed hawks, Cooper's hawks, American kestrels, or sharp-shinned hawks) that may be captured statewide in Michigan each year for use in falconry. Elimination of this statutory limit would apparently allow the Natural Resources Commission to decide what, if any, limit should be set in its Wildlife Conservation Order regulating falconry.

In addition, the bill would require that the falconry order be based on "sound management practices," and eliminate a requirement that the DNR educate the public about raptors in the first year of the falconry order and to study methods of monitoring raptor populations.

The bill would keep in place the current statewide limit of two northern goshawks that may be captured per year for use in falconry.

FISCAL IMPACT:

These bills would not have a fiscal impact on the state or local governmental units.

BACKGROUND:

The 25-raptor limit that the bill proposes to eliminate is a statewide limit, not a limit per falconer. A licensed falconer with a general raptor capture permit must report a capture

of a live raptor to the DNR within 24 hours by telephone or e-mail. When the statewide limit of 25 is reached, no more of the specified raptors may be captured by any falconers, and any remaining unused general capture permits are revoked.

The current Wildlife Conservation Order (Chapter X, Falconry) governing falconry may be found on the DNR website: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/ChapterX_128648

POSITIONS:

The Department of Natural Resources supports the bill. (4-8-08)

Michigan Hawking Club supports the bill. (4-8-08)

Michigan United Conservation Clubs supports the bill. (4-8-08)

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