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Senate Bill 349 (as enacted) Senate Bill 409 (as enacted) Sponsor: Senator Jim Barcia PUBLIC ACT 69 of 2009 PUBLIC ACT 34 of 2009

Senate Committee: Hunting, Fishing and Outdoor Recreation

House Committee: Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Natural Resources

Date Completed: 7-20-09

RATIONALE

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act sets the amount of hunting and fishing license fees and establishes a one-year period during which a hunting or fishing license is valid, subject to an exception for limited seasons. Previously, the Act allowed the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to provide a discount on licenses for marketing purposes, the purchase of multiple licenses, or the harvest of antlerless deer. It was suggested that revising the circumstances under which a discount could be granted, eliminating a limit on the discount, and giving the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) flexibility to determine the time period for which a license is valid, might help reverse the State's downward trend in hunting and fishing and assist the Department in meeting harvest and management objectives.

CONTENT

<u>Senate Bill 349</u> amended Part 435 (Hunting and Fishing Licensing) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to revise provisions concerning discounts on hunting and fishing license fees.

<u>Senate Bill 409</u> amended Part 435 to revise provisions related to the period that a hunting or fishing license or permit is valid.

Senate Bill 349 took effect on July 7, 2009. Senate Bill 409 took effect on June 4, 2009. The bills are described below in further detail.

Senate Bill 349

Previously, under Part 435, the DNR could discount the price of a license up to 15% for marketing purposes to increase participation hunting and fishina activities. in Additionally, the price of the anterless deer license could be reduced or eliminated in specific areas to help achieve the harvest of anterless deer. If a person purchased four or more licenses for the same person at the same time, a sportsperson discount of 15% had to be provided. Waterfowl hunting licenses and limited fishing licenses were not eligible for the sportsperson discount.

The bill deleted the provisions regarding the antlerless deer license and sportsperson discount, as well as the 15% limit on a discount offered for marketing purposes. Under the bill, the price of any license or application fee may be discounted or eliminated to achieve a harvest or management objective for that species.

Senate Bill 409

Previously, all licenses issued under Part 435 were valid from March 1 through March 31 of the following year, except for licenses or permits that were valid for a designated limited season. Under the bill, all licenses issued are valid from March 1 through March 31 of the following year, or as otherwise provided by order of the Natural Resources Commission. The DNR must designate the period of validity on the license or permit.

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The fee for a multiyear license, permit, or application must be the applicable annual fee multiplied by the number of years designated by the NRC's order.

At least six months before the NRC issues an order under the bill, the DNR must report to the Legislature how the Department will ensure that the money collected for any multiyear licenses or permits is accounted for and allocated to the appropriate fiscal year.

MCL 324.43521 (S.B. 349) 324.43542 (S.B. 409)

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

The bills will assist the DNR in managing game, as well as encourage hunter and angler recruitment and retention. example, under Senate Bill 349, the Department may offer a greater discount to a person who purchases licenses several years in a row. Under Senate Bill 409, the NRC may authorize the sale of licenses that are valid for more than one year, thus making it more convenient for sportspeople to participate time and again. encouraging consistent license purchasing practices, the bills will help foster the next generation of hunters and anglers and alleviate some of the Department's budgetary pressures.

Response: The Act should provide for partnerships between the DNR and nonprofit sportsperson and conservation groups for marketing purposes. Through such partnerships, the related organizations could actively promote license purchases at a discount to their members. While current law does not preclude the Department from pursuing these arrangements, express statutory authorization could be beneficial.

Legislative Analyst: Julie Cassidy

FISCAL IMPACT

Senate Bill 349

The bill will have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the State. An increase in license discounts or temporary elimination of the

fee for harvest-management purposes may result in a loss of or increase to the Game and Fish Protection Fund, depending on whether discounts and promotions result in additional applications.

Senate Bill 409

The bill will have an indeterminate impact that depends on the number of multipleyear licenses issued and the interest rate.

Fiscal Analyst: Bill Bowerman

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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.