

HB 3204 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On General Government

Prepared By: Caine Francis, LPRO Analyst

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/16, 3/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon State Police, and State Department of Agriculture to provide a report no later than December 31, 2021 to the Legislative Assembly on the state's framework for preventing and responding to zoonotic diseases . Requires report to include response protocols, enforcement practices, and evaluation of whether a more comprehensive framework is required. Directs State Fish and Wildlife Commission to maintain list of wildlife that may not be imported, possessed, sold, purchased, exchanged, or transported in the state. Authorizes the commission to adopt rules and file suit for civil damages for violations. Prohibits sale of wildlife not native to the state and that is sold alive for the purpose of human consumption; exempts livestock and shellfish. Declares emergency, effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Directs State Department of Fish and Wildlife to prepare the report in consultation with the Oregon Health Authority, Oregon State Police, and State Department of Agriculture. Adds food fish, wildlife sold at the Oregon State Fair or a county fair, and wildlife sold pursuant to a 4-H program as exempt from the prohibition on the sale of wildlife not native to the state and sold alive for the purpose of human consumption.

BACKGROUND:

Zoonotic diseases are diseases that can be shared between animals and people, including rabies, salmonella, and West Nile virus. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as of February 2021 the exact source of the current outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is unknown, however it is known that it originally came from an animal. The CDC indicates there is no evidence to suggest SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is spreading in free-living wildlife in the United States, or that wildlife might be a source of infection for people. Additionally, while there is no evidence that a person can get COVID-19 by preparing or eating food, including wild hunted game meat in the United States, the CDC states that hunters can get infected with many diseases when processing or eating game.

Statute defines wildlife policy for the state to manage wildlife, prevent serious depletion of any indigenous species, and provide the optimum recreational and aesthetic benefits for present and future generations of the citizens of this state. By ORS 496 (2019), the State Fish and Wildlife Commission (SFWC) and State Department of Fish and Wildlife (SDFW) are responsible for implementing this wildlife policy and for the administration of wildlife laws, including provisions for threatened and endangered species, hunting and fishing regulations, enforcement of wildlife laws, and penalties for violations. This includes issuing licenses for hunting and fishing in the state at identified locations and times of year.

House Bill 3204 directs the SFWC to maintain list of wildlife that may not be imported, possessed, sold, purchased, exchanged, or transported in the state. The measure also prohibits the sale of nonnative wildlife that is sold alive for the purpose of human consumption. Finally, the measure directs the SDFW, the Oregon Health Authority, Oregon State Police, and the State Department of Agriculture to report to the Legislative Assembly on the state's framework for preventing and responding to zoonotic diseases.