

SB 320 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

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Meeting Dates: 2/9, 3/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Modifies issuance of group angling and shellfish taking license to include eligible members of the Armed Forces whose duty station is a warrior transition unit or a federal Veterans' Administration hospital or domiciliary, or qualifying nonprofit organization. Enables the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to issue free group licenses, without precondition, for use by recipients of said hospital, domiciliary or nonprofit services, valid for one year each, limited to three per year. Authorizes licensee organizations to direct license usage. Allows ODFW to suspend or cancel group license for noncompliance. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

Fiscal impact issued; no revenue impact issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Legislation introduced during 2020 regular session
- Community of support for veterans

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 Replaces measure. Permits State Fish and Wildlife Commission (SFWC) to authorize nonprofits serving veterans, or armed forces members whose duty station is a warrior transition unit, through a program of angling or shellfish harvest established on or before January 1, 2021, to conduct excursions where said members may angle or take shellfish at no cost using licenses, permits, or tags with certain provisions. Prohibits agent of SFWC that issues said licenses from retaining any portion of an agent fee for issuance of the daily licenses. Authorizes SFWC to suspend or revoke authorization if the nonprofit organization does not meet qualifications or violates a SFWC rule. Permits SFWC to adopt rules as necessary to implement program requirements. Establishes operative date of January 1, 2022 and repeal date of January 2, 2027 with certain provisions.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon offers a variety of recreation opportunities for veterans and servicemembers, including: free hunting and angling licenses for eligible disabled veterans; reduced cost hunting and fishing for nonresident uniformed servicemembers; special four-year access passes for eligible disabled veterans that allow free camping and day-use at more than 25 state park sites; reimbursement for active duty servicemembers using state parks while on leave; and free tags for hunting and fishing through nonprofit entities that organize group excursions for eligible disabled veterans and Purple Heart recipients.

Senate Bill 320 expands the availability of free group hunting and fishing licenses to include warrior transition units and federal Veterans' Administration hospitals or domiciles, in addition to qualifying nonprofit organizations, serving both veterans and certain active duty personnel, and authorizes the entity to direct the use of such licenses.