

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE  
Revised

House Bill 1118 (Delegates Guns and Weir)

Environmental Matters

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Natural Resources - Freshwater Fishing Guides

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This emergency bill establishes a new category of freshwater fishing guide license that allows a licensee to operate in nontidal freshwater *and* specified tidal water areas. The fee for the new category of license is \$50 for residents and \$100 for nonresidents.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Special fund revenue increase of approximately \$5,100 annually beginning in FY 2001; offsetting special fund expenditure increase to issue the new licenses and to monitor the freshwater fishery.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal. Freshwater fishing guides who obtain the new license may benefit to the extent that the expanded area in which the guides would be authorized to operate attracts additional business.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The bill prohibits a recreational angler under the guidance of a freshwater fishing guide in tidal waters from possessing striped bass or, from March 1 through May 31, catching or attempting to catch striped bass in spawning areas and rivers. An applicant for a freshwater fishing license that will be used in tidal waters must demonstrate to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that the applicant has obtained the appropriate federal licenses.

DNR must adopt regulations to (1) prohibit a person from furnishing any service as a fishing

guide that requires operating a boat or vessel as part of that service without complying with the appropriate federal regulations governing the operation of a vessel carrying passengers for hire; (2) limit to 150 the number of licenses issued annually that allow a person to operate in both nontidal and designated tidal water areas; (3) allocate not more than 20% of those licenses to nonresidents; and (4) establish provisions for maintaining a waiting list for applicants desiring a license to operate in nontidal and designated tidal water areas. All fees collected must be used for monitoring the freshwater fishery, including the capture and tagging of black bass in order to develop information and methods to sustain a healthy black bass population. DNR must publicly report annually the amounts collected and expenditures made.

DNR must report to the Governor and specified committees of the General Assembly by December 1, 2003 on the waters that are being fished by freshwater fishing guides, the types and numbers of fish that are being caught by recreational anglers guided by freshwater fishing guides, and the number of licenses issued that allow a person to operate in nontidal freshwater and tidal areas designated by the bill.

**Current Law:** Chapter 286 of 1999 authorized DNR to issue a license to individuals who hold appropriate federal licenses and who have completed a boating safety course and first aid course to provide services as a fishing guide. The fee for obtaining a freshwater fishing guide license is \$20 for residents and \$50 for nonresidents. A freshwater fishing guide license is not valid in tidal waters.

**State Fiscal Effect:** The current fee for obtaining a freshwater fishing guide license is \$20 for residents and \$50 for nonresidents. Currently, DNR receives a total of approximately \$5,200 in license fee revenues annually from the 200 freshwater fishing guides (\$3,200 from residents; \$2,000 from nonresidents). DNR anticipates that 150 of the currently licensed guides would apply for the new category of license established by the bill. The license fees established for the new category of license are \$50 for residents and \$100 for nonresidents. Assuming that 20% of the new licenses would be issued to nonresidents, as the bill allows, special fund revenues will increase by an estimated \$5,100 annually. However, special fund expenditures are estimated to increase by an offsetting amount in order to administer the new category of license and to monitor the freshwater fishery, as required by the bill.

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## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 28, 2000  
jir/jr Revised - House Third Reader - March 22, 2000

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