

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 68 (Delegates Carey, Metzgar, and Simonaire)
Environment and Transportation Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Hunting and Fishing - Discounted Licenses - Purple Heart Recipients

This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to implement programs to provide discounted angler's licenses and trout stamps, Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing licenses, and hunting licenses and any associated State-issued stamps or permits, to Maryland residents who are recipients of the Purple Heart award. DNR must report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the number of discounted licenses, stamps, and permits issued to recipients of the Purple Heart award under the bill.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017, and terminates June 30, 2020.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Special fund revenues decrease from FY 2018 through 2020 as a result of issuing discounted licenses, stamps, and permits to recipients of the Purple Heart award. The extent of any such decrease cannot be reliably estimated. However, *for illustrative purposes*, special fund revenues may decrease by between \$10,000 and \$20,000 for every 1,000 discounted licenses issued, not accounting for foregone special fund revenues from associated stamps and permits. Expenditures are not affected; DNR can implement the bill with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: DNR issues various types of hunting and fishing licenses and associated stamps and permits. These licenses can be purchased online through DNR's COMPASS portal. Although licenses are generally required to hunt or fish in the State, there are certain exceptions. For example, a person serving in the U.S. Armed Forces who has a service-connected disability and possesses a valid military identification while hunting is not required to hold a hunting license, and a Maryland resident who is on leave from active duty with the U.S. Armed Forces is not required to hold a hunting or a fishing license. In addition, a retired former member of the U.S. Armed Forces hunting on active farmland is not required to hold a hunting license under specified conditions.

DNR is authorized to issue complimentary hunting and fishing licenses, at no charge, to Maryland residents who are former prisoners of war or 100% service-connected disabled American veterans.

Varying fees apply for DNR hunting and fishing licenses. The annual fees for resident hunting, angler's, and Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing licenses are \$24.50, \$20.50, and \$15.00, respectively. Lower fees apply to certain junior, senior, and short-term licenses. The fee for a trout stamp is \$5 for residents. The fees for residents for the most widely purchased hunting stamps and permits are generally between \$5 and \$10.

State Revenues: Special fund revenues decrease from fiscal 2018 through 2020 as a result of issuing discounted licenses, stamps, and permits to Maryland residents who are recipients of the Purple Heart award. The extent of any such decrease, however, cannot be reliably estimated at this time. Information is not readily available on the number of Purple Heart award recipients living in Maryland. In addition, the number of such recipients who seek to obtain a discounted license and any associated stamps or permits pursuant to the bill is unknown.

For illustrative purposes, assuming the discount on license fees is in the range of \$10 to \$20 per license, special fund revenues decrease by \$10,000 to \$20,000 for every 1,000 discounted licenses issued. A \$10 to \$20 discount is consistent with current differences between the fees for *regular* resident angler's, Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing, and hunter's licenses and the reduced fees for *junior, senior, and short-term* licenses of those types. This does not account for additional loss of revenue from discounted stamps or permits issued to those licensees. This illustrative example assumes that any discounted licenses are issued to persons that would have purchased a license in the absence of the bill. To the extent the discount itself generates additional license sales, the loss in revenues is less.

The hunting, angler's, and Chesapeake Bay and coastal sport fishing license fees are deposited in the Wildlife Management and Protection Fund, Fisheries Management and Protection Fund, and Fisheries Research and Development Fund, respectively.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Department of Veterans Affairs; Military Department; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 23, 2017
mm/lgc Third Reader - March 23, 2017
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 23, 2017
Enrolled - May 9, 2017
Revised - Amendment(s) - May 9, 2017
Revised - Clarification - May 9, 2017

Analysis by: Scott D. Kennedy

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510