

## California Sportfishing League's State Legislative Watch

While the 2017 State Legislative session offered great promise for recreational fishing's future, it concluded in October with mixed results. The California Sportfishing League, an organization dedicated to protecting the angler's right to fish, championed several fishing license bills this year that aimed to increase fishing participation rates and license sales that would generate new revenue for state fishery programs. Most notably, these bills enjoyed broad based support from state and local organizations representing anglers, boaters, marina operators, small business, labor, and the travel and hospitality industry. While the fishing license bills had no recorded opposition, some were killed by the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

### **Sportfishing Bills that Passed and Failed:**

#### **[SB 144 \(McGuire/Nielsen\)](#)**

A steelhead report card is required of anglers taking steelhead trout. Monies from the sale of the cards is used by the Department of Fish and Wildlife to monitor take and to fund steelhead conservation programs. SB 144 extends this program through January 1, 2023.

**Status:** Signed into law by Governor Brown.

#### **[SB 161; \(McGuire\)](#) Fish and Game Commission.**

This bill requires the Fish and Game Commission to form a tribal committee from its membership consisting of at least one commissioner and would require the committee to report to the commission from time to time on its activities, and to make recommendations on all tribal matters considered by the commission.

**Status:** Signed into law by Governor Brown

#### **[SB 187 \(Berryhill\)](#) 12-Month Fishing License**

This legislation sponsored by the California Sportfishing League aims to increase fishing participation rates, license sales and state revenue by making annual fishing license sales valid for a full 12-months from the date of purchase.

**Status:** Bill was held by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and then its language was amended into SB 518. SB 518 will be considered in January 2018.

#### **[SB 234 \(Berryhill\)](#) Protection of Local Fishing Rights**

This legislation, sponsored by the California Sportfishing League, required the California Fish and Game Commission to conduct a survey and evaluation of local agencies to determine whether they were enacting illegal fishing restrictions, like pier and jetty fishing bans. According to current law, and the California Constitution, only the F&G Commission can establish recreational fishing regulations that limit the amount and method of take. While local public agencies continue to violate the law, the F&G Commission opposed SB 234 in its final form.

**Status:** Held by the Assembly Appropriations Committee. The bill is dead.

**[AB 478 \(Waldron\)](#) Free Fishing Up to 18**

Under existing law, anglers are not required to obtain a fishing license until the age of 16. This bill increases the eligibility to fish for free to 18 years of age. Given that over 70 percent of anglers learned to fish during their youth, making fishing more affordable could increase future fishing participation rates and increase future fishing license sales.

**Status:** Held by Assembly Appropriations Committee. The bill is dead.

**[AB 986 \(Gallagher\)](#) 12-Month Fishing License/Veterans Discount**

This legislation, similar to SB 187, aims to increase fishing license sales and revenue by making annual fishing license sales valid for a full 12-months from the date of purchase. The bill also discounts annual fishing license fees for American veterans.

**Status:** The Assembly Appropriations Committee has deemed AB 986 a two-year bill. May be acted upon January 2018.

**[AB 1337 \(Patterson\)](#) Government Transparency/Fish and Game Commission**

This bill will ensure greater government transparency by requiring the commission to provide a live video broadcast on its website of every commission and subcommittee meeting that is open to the public.

**Status:** Held on the Senate Floor

***To learn more about the California Sportfishing League's efforts to protect your right to fish, visit [www.savefishing.com](http://www.savefishing.com)***