



## PRESS RELEASE

# **Bills Aim to Make Fishing More Affordable and Accessible for California's Honorably Discharged Veterans**

## *California Sportfishing League sponsors Senate Bill 1081 and Assembly Bill 1844*

March 23, 2016 (Folsom, CA): Today, the California Sportfishing League, California's leading advocate for California anglers, announced that they are sponsoring two bills introduced in the California State Legislature that aim to increase fishing participation and make hunting and fishing more affordable and accessible for California's honorably discharged veterans, especially those with service-connected disabilities.

"For many disabled California veterans hunting and fishing is not only a great form of recreation, but a source of strength as they face life with with a disability," said Marko Mlikotin, executive director of the California Sportfishing League. "At a time when California sells the most expensive fishing licenses in the Nation, legislation that makes fishing more affordable and accessible for veterans could not be more timely."

As the sponsor of Senate Bill 1081 and Assembly Bill 1844, the California Sportfishing League encourages California anglers and hunters to contact their state legislators.

"In defending our nation, veterans have given up countless hours of time with loved ones," said Senator Mike Morrell. "For those veterans who enjoy fishing and hunting in California, there should be fewer barriers in place to accessing these recreational sports, especially since they are often bonding activities for families. By reducing the overall price burden, we give these individuals greater ability to make the most of our state's natural resources and outdoor opportunities."

AD 1844, is expected to come before the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks and Wildlife on March 29, 2016. SB 1081 will be heard by the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water also on March 29, 2016.

"AB 1844 recognizes the sacrifices of our veterans by granting them a well-deserved discount on hunting and fishing licenses," said Assembly Member James Gallagher. "These recreational outdoor activities can help veterans rehabilitate from the stresses of their service. This bill helps veterans and also encourages participation in a vital California industry and pastime."

**[Senate Bill 1081](#)**; authored by [Senator Mike Morrell, 23<sup>rd</sup> District](#) (R-Rancho Cucamonga), will reduce sportfishing and hunting licenses to a flat-fee of \$5.00 for honorably discharged

California veterans, and discount fishing tags by 50%. In addition, disabled or recovering service members will be provided licenses and fishing tags for free.

**[Assembly Bill 1844](#)**; authored by [Assembly Member James Gallagher](#), 3<sup>rd</sup> District (R-Plumas Lake), will reduce hunting and fishing licenses by 25% for honorably discharged California veterans, reducing the annual fishing licenses fee from \$47.01 to \$35.26. Veterans with a fifty-percent or greater service-connected disability will be entitled to additional savings, a 50% discount on licenses and fishing report cards. Discounts also apply to lifetime fishing licenses.

The California Sportfishing League (CSL) is a nonprofit coalition of fresh and saltwater anglers, and small business owners devoted to protecting access to recreational fishing. Recreational fishing contributes over \$4.9 billion annually to California's economy, a major source of outdoor tourism and jobs. In 2015, the California Sportfishing League released a [report](#) that revealed that California's annual fishing license sales had declined over 55% since 1980, and with tags, were the costliest in the Nation.

To learn more visit [www.SportfishingConservation.org](http://www.SportfishingConservation.org) or [@CASportfishing](https://twitter.com/CASportfishing)

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