



PRESS RELEASE

Senate Committee Guts Fishing License Reform Bill Supporters vow to restore 12-month license provision

May 29, 2015 (Sacramento, CA): Yesterday, the California State Senate Appropriations Committee passed the California Sportfishing Stimulus Act of 2015, clearing the way for fish license reforms to advance to the full Senate floor.

Unfortunately, the Committee gutted a central provision of the bill that aimed to address California's unprecedented decline in fishing participation and license sales. The amended legislation no longer includes a provision that would establish an adult fishing license that would be valid a full 12-months from the date of purchase.

"We are very disappointed that the committee gutted the bill, removing a provision that would establish an adult fishing license valid for a full 12-months from the date of purchase," said Marko Mlikotin, executive director for the California Sportfishing League. "This provision was critical to reversing California's unprecedented decline in fishing participation, and protecting the communities and jobs dependent on outdoor recreation and tourism."

A coalition, lead by the California Sportfishing League and the legislation's author, Senator Tom Berryhill, is fully committed to establishing a 12-month fishing license.

"I am not giving up on creating a more convenient and practical license system, but this is clearly a set-back," said Senator Tom Berryhill. "California's fishing license purchases have been on a free fall for years. The Department of Fish and Wildlife has no plan to revitalize a system on which environmental and habitat restoration depend. This is an example of bureaucrats standing in the way of progress."

"Efforts to reform California's costly and antiquated fishing license program are still within reach," said Mlikotin. "It is our hope that the State Assembly will recognize the need to abandon a fishing license system that has contributed to an unprecedented decline in fishing license sales. It's time for California to embrace reforms that have increased fishing license sales and revenue in other states. We look forward to working with Senator Tom Berryhill and Assemblyman Frank Bigelow to make sure that California establishes a 12-month fishing license."

As introduced, SB 345 aims to:

- Make an annual fishing license valid for a full 12 -months, rather than just the calendar year.
- Create a junior fishing license at a reduced base price of \$8.25 (not including special permits), similar to the state's junior hunting license.
- Allow charitable organizations to use fish caught by anglers for charitable and organizational functions, and not subject the charities to fines if an event exceeds possession limits.

Background

In March, the California Sportfishing League released [a study](#) that concluded that the number of annual fishing license sales has decline over 55% since 1980, and at a rate of over 35,000 a year. The decline threatens critical hatchery and habitat restoration programs funded by fishing license sales.

Senate Bill 345, sponsored by the California Sportfishing League and introduced by Senator Tom Berryhill (R-Twain Harte) and Assembly Member Frank Bigelow (R-O'Neals). The legislation is supported by one of the largest and most diverse coalitions, including anglers, business, labor, local government and tourism. For more information about SB345 and to view a supporter list of over of 25 associations, visit CSL's website or [click here](#).

Recreational fishing contributes over \$4.9 billion in economic activity each year, supporting jobs and communities dependent on it for outdoor recreation and tourism.

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. To learn more visit www.SportfishingConservation.org or @CASportfishing

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