



AB 986: Hunting and Fishing Licenses

SUMMARY

Current law only offers discounts on fishing and hunting licenses to disabled or recovering veterans. This bill would expand this discount to all honorably discharged veterans to expand access to California's outdoor opportunities and demonstrate California's appreciation of their service. Additionally, under current law, an annual sport fishing license is valid from date of purchase until December 31st. This bill would instead require licenses be issued for the period of 12 consecutive months from date of purchase.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Department of Fish and Wildlife is funded in large part by sport fishing license fees, and receives millions of dollars from the federal government from taxes generated from fishing tackle sales. As state fishing license sales continue to decline, the Department stands to lose millions of federal dollars within a few short years, putting fishery management, fish stocking and habitat conservation programs at further risk.

Existing law offers reduced hunting and fishing licenses for disabled or recovering veterans with a 50 percent or greater service connected disability who want to hunt birds or mammals or fish. The discount allows

veterans to pay \$7.30 for a license instead of \$47.

In 2016 disabled veterans and recovering service members brought in combined revenue of \$105,240 for sport fishing licenses. In addition revenue from disabled veterans and recovering service members totaled \$25,576 for hunting licenses. These revenues account for a small proportion of total revenue from fishing and hunting licenses. Total revenue for sport fishing licenses for 2016 was \$58,930,979 and for hunting licenses the total revenue was \$10,932,525.¹

In the state of California there are currently around 2 million veterans residing in the state with 251,937 receiving monthly disability compensation as of 2010.² Fishing contributes \$4.9 billion in economic activity for the state of California according to the Department of Fish and Wildlife.³

California offers an "annual" sport fishing license. However, this license expires on December 31 of every year regardless of when purchased. A license purchased in January costs the same as a license purchased in December even though both expire on the same day.

SOLUTION

This bill requires sport fishing licenses to be issued for a period of 12 consecutive months from the date of purchase and discounts lifetime hunting and annual sport fishing

1. CDFW Revenue Reports <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Statistics/action/review/content/6949#huntinglicenses>
2. CA State Summary from Dept. Veteran Affairs (November 2010)
3. California Sportfishing League Study 2015. http://www.sportfishingconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/3.23.15CSL_Cost-Value-Study.pdf
4. California outdoors qas: <https://californiaoutdoorsqas.com/2015/04/02/why-dont-licenses-run-annually-from-date-of-purchase/>

licenses for all honorably discharged California veterans by 25%. This is an incentive for fishermen and veterans to buy annual licenses, increasing revenue for the Department of Fish and Wildlife and reversing the decline of annual sport fishing license sales.

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

“AB 986 recognizes the sacrifices of our veterans by granting them a well-deserved discount on hunting and fishing licenses. 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.”

SUPPORT

California Sportfishing League
Outdoor Sportsmen's Coalition of California
Safari Club International
The California Sportsman's Lobby, Inc.

OPPOSITION

None on file

MORE INFORMATION

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