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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 633 (as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Senator Gerald Van Woerkom
Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

CONTENT

The bill would amend Part 435 (Hunting and Fishing Licensing) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to establish a disabled veterans firearm deer season on all lands in the State. The disabled veterans firearm deer season would have to correspond with the youth firearm hunting days, if any, established by order of the Natural Resources Commission. A disabled veteran could take one deer during the season. A disabled veteran taking deer during the season would have to possess a current firearm deer license, combination deer license, or antlerless deer license or a deer management assistance permit authorizing him or her to take a deer with a firearm and issued for the area or land upon which he or she was hunting. The same kind of deer could be taken during the disabled veterans season as during the regular November firearm deer season.

Under Part 435, a resident who has been determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to be permanently and totally disabled and entitled to veterans benefits at the 100% rate, for a disability other than blindness, is eligible to purchase a senior hunting or fishing license, the fee for which is discounted 60% from the fee for a resident license. Under the bill, a "disabled veteran" would be eligible to purchase a senior hunting or fishing license. "Disabled veteran" would be defined as described above, except that the bill specifies that the disability would have to be as a result of military service.

MCL 324.43537

Legislative Analyst: Julie Cassidy

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill's establishment of a disabled veterans firearm deer season would have an indeterminate effect on the revenue collected from fishing and hunting licenses by the Department of Natural Resources. To the extent that the bill would result in more veterans purchasing hunting licenses, the State would see an increase in revenue. Currently, veterans who are classified as 100% disabled for disabilities other than blindness by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs are eligible to purchase a senior fishing or hunting license. The current price for a Senior Firearm Deer License is \$6 and the price for a Senior Combination Deer License (covering both archery and firearms hunting) is \$12. The bill does not call for any changes to this fee schedule.

Revenue from fishing and hunting licenses is deposited into the Game and Fish Protection account of the Conservation and Recreation Legacy Fund, which is established in the Michigan Constitution. This funding is used to support the development, improvement, operation, promotion, and maintenance of wildlife and fisheries programs and facilities.

Date Completed: 7-25-07

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