



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 22

January Session, 2023

Substitute House Bill No. 6314

House of Representatives, March 7, 2023

The Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs reported through REP. NOLAN of the 39th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR DISCOUNTED HUNTING, TRAPPING AND FISHING LICENSES FOR VETERANS AND ACTIVE DUTY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 26-28 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

3 (a) Except as provided in subsections (b) to (f), inclusive, of this
4 section, the fees for firearms hunting, archery hunting, trapping and
5 sport fishing licenses or for the combination thereof shall be as follows:
6 (1) Resident firearms hunting license, nineteen dollars; (2) resident
7 fishing license, twenty-eight dollars; (3) resident marine waters fishing
8 license, ten dollars; (4) one-day resident marine waters fishing license,
9 five dollars; (5) resident all-waters fishing license, thirty-two dollars; (6)
10 resident combination license to fish in inland waters and firearms hunt,
11 thirty-eight dollars; (7) resident combination license to fish in marine
12 waters and firearms hunt, twenty-five dollars; (8) resident combination

13 license to fish in all waters and firearms hunt, forty dollars; (9) resident
14 combination license to fish in all waters and bow and arrow permit to
15 hunt deer and small game issued pursuant to section 26-86c, as
16 amended by this act, sixty-five dollars; (10) resident firearms super sport
17 license to fish in all waters and firearms hunt, firearms private land
18 shotgun or rifle deer permit issued pursuant to section 26-86a, as
19 amended by this act, and permit to hunt wild turkey during the spring
20 season on private land issued pursuant to section 26-48a, seventy
21 dollars; (11) resident archery super sport license to fish in all waters,
22 bow and arrow permit to hunt deer and small game issued pursuant to
23 section 26-86c, as amended by this act, and permit to hunt wild turkey
24 during the spring season on private land issued pursuant to section 26-
25 48a, eighty-two dollars; (12) resident firearms super sport license to fish
26 in all waters and firearms hunt, firearms private land shotgun or rifle
27 deer permit, muzzleloader private land deer permit, pursuant to section
28 26-86 and private land permit to hunt wild turkey during spring season
29 pursuant to section 26-48a, eighty-four dollars; (13) resident firearms
30 super sport license to fish in all waters and firearms hunt, migratory bird
31 conservation stamp, and migratory bird harvest permit (HIP), fifty
32 dollars; (14) resident trapping license, thirty-four dollars; (15) resident
33 junior trapping license for persons under sixteen years of age, eleven
34 dollars; (16) junior firearms hunting license, eleven dollars; (17)
35 nonresident firearms hunting license, ninety-one dollars; (18)
36 nonresident inland waters fishing license, fifty-five dollars; (19)
37 nonresident inland waters fishing license for a period of three
38 consecutive days, twenty-two dollars; (20) nonresident marine waters
39 fishing license, fifteen dollars; (21) nonresident marine waters fishing
40 license for a period of three consecutive days, eight dollars; (22)
41 nonresident all-waters fishing license, sixty-three dollars; (23)
42 nonresident combination license to firearms hunt and inland waters
43 fish, one hundred ten dollars; (24) nonresident combination license to
44 fish in all waters and firearms hunt, one hundred twenty dollars; (25)
45 nonresident combination license to fish in marine waters and firearms
46 hunt, ninety-four dollars; and (26) nonresident trapping license, two
47 hundred fifty dollars. Persons sixty-five years of age and over who have

48 been residents of this state for not less than one year and who meet the
49 requirements of subsection (b) of section 26-31 may be issued an annual
50 license to firearms hunt or to fish or combination license to fish and
51 firearms hunt or a license to trap without fee. The issuing agency shall
52 indicate on a combination license the specific purpose for which such
53 license is issued. The town clerk shall retain a recording fee of one dollar
54 for each license issued by such clerk.

55 (b) Any nonresident residing in one of the New England states or the
56 state of New York may procure a license to hunt or to fish or to hunt and
57 fish for the same fee or fees as a resident of this state if such nonresident
58 is a resident of a state the laws of which allow the same privilege to
59 residents of this state.

60 (c) The fee for a group fishing license, as described in subsection (h)
61 of section 26-30, shall be one hundred twenty-five dollars.

62 (d) (1) (A) The fee charged for any firearms hunting, archery hunting,
63 trapping or sport fishing license that is issued to any Connecticut
64 resident who is sixteen or seventeen years of age shall be equal to fifty
65 per cent of the fee provided for such license in subsection (a) of this
66 section, rounded to the next highest dollar.

67 (B) The fee charged for any firearms hunting, archery hunting,
68 trapping or sport fishing license that is issued to any veteran or any
69 active duty member of the armed forces shall be equal to fifty per cent
70 of the fee provided for such license in subsection (a) of this section that
71 is applicable to a Connecticut resident, rounded to the next highest
72 dollar.

73 (2) (A) The fee charged pursuant to section 26-27b, 26-48a, 26-86a, as
74 amended by this act, or 26-86c, as amended by this act, for any firearms
75 hunting, archery hunting, trapping or sport fishing permit, tag or stamp
76 that is issued to any Connecticut resident who is less than eighteen years
77 of age shall be equal to fifty per cent of the fee provided for such permit,
78 tag or stamp in said sections, rounded to the next highest dollar.

79 (B) The fee charged pursuant to section 26-27b, 26-48a, 26-86a, as
80 amended by this act, or 26-86c, as amended by this act, for any firearms
81 hunting, archery hunting, trapping or sport fishing permit, tag or stamp
82 that is issued to any veteran or any active duty member of the armed
83 forces shall be equal to fifty per cent of the fee provided for such permit,
84 tag or stamp in said sections that is applicable to a Connecticut resident,
85 rounded to the next highest dollar.

86 (3) As used in this subsection, "veteran" and "armed forces" have the
87 same meanings as provided in section 27-103.

88 (e) In addition to the calendar day designated pursuant to subsection
89 (f) of section 26-27, the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental
90 Protection may designate two additional days in each calendar year on
91 which a one-day license for sport fishing may be issued free of charge.
92 The commissioner may make such one-day license available to all
93 members of the public or to all members of an age group designated by
94 said commissioner.

95 (f) From time to time and for the purpose of increasing participation,
96 the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection with the
97 concurrence of the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management,
98 may reduce, but not completely waive, the fee or cost for any license,
99 permit, tag or stamp, or combination thereof, as provided for in this
100 section or section 26-27b, 26-48a, 26-86a, as amended by this act, or 26-
101 86c, as amended by this act. Any such reduction shall: (1) Be for a
102 portion of a calendar year, (2) remain in effect only during the calendar
103 year in which such reduction is made, and (3) be made only if such
104 reduction is provided to all members of the public, to all members of a
105 certain age group, or to individuals who, in such calendar year,
106 successfully complete a course of instruction in fishing techniques, as
107 provided for in section 26-31a or a conservation education course of
108 instruction, as provided for in subsection (a) of section 26-31.

109 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 26-86a of the general statutes is
110 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
111 *2023*):

112 (a) The commissioner shall establish by regulation adopted in
113 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 standards for deer
114 management, and methods, regulated areas, bag limits, seasons and
115 permit eligibility for hunting deer with bow and arrow, muzzleloader
116 and shotgun, except that no such hunting shall be permitted on Sunday
117 by any means other than with bow and arrow on private property
118 pursuant to section 26-73. No person shall hunt, pursue, wound or kill
119 deer with a firearm without first obtaining a deer permit from the
120 commissioner in addition to the license required by section 26-27.
121 Application for such permit shall be made on forms furnished by the
122 commissioner and containing such information as he may require. Such
123 permit shall be of a design prescribed by the commissioner, shall contain
124 such information and conditions as the commissioner may require, and
125 may be revoked for violation of any provision of this chapter or
126 regulations adopted pursuant thereto. As used in this section,
127 "muzzleloader" means a rifle or shotgun of at least forty-five caliber,
128 incapable of firing a self-contained cartridge, which uses powder, a
129 projectile, including, but not limited to, a standard round ball, mini-
130 balls, maxi-balls and Sabot bullets, and wadding loaded separately at
131 the muzzle end, and "rifle" means a long gun the projectile of which is
132 six millimeters or larger in diameter. The fee for a firearms permit shall
133 be nineteen dollars for residents of the state and sixty-eight dollars for
134 nonresidents. [except that any nonresident who is an active full-time
135 member of the armed forces, as defined in section 27-103, may purchase
136 a firearms permit for the same fee as is charged a resident of the state.]
137 The commissioner shall issue, without fee, a private land deer permit to
138 the owner of ten or more acres of private land and the husband or wife,
139 parent, grandparent, sibling and any lineal descendant of such owner,
140 provided no such owner, husband or wife, parent, grandparent, sibling
141 or lineal descendant shall be issued more than one such permit per
142 season. Such permit shall allow the use of a rifle, shotgun, muzzleloader
143 or bow and arrow on such land from November first to December thirty-
144 first, inclusive. Deer may be so hunted at such times and in such areas
145 of such state-owned land as are designated by the Commissioner of
146 Energy and Environmental Protection and on privately owned land

147 with the signed consent of the landowner, on forms furnished by the
148 department, and such signed consent shall be carried by any person
149 when so hunting on private land. The owner of ten acres or more of
150 private land may allow the use of a rifle to hunt deer on such land
151 during the shotgun season. The commissioner shall determine, by
152 regulation, the number of consent forms issued for any regulated area
153 established by said commissioner. The commissioner shall provide for
154 a fair and equitable random method for the selection of successful
155 applicants who may obtain shotgun and muzzleloader permits for
156 hunting deer on state lands. Any person whose name appears on more
157 than one application for a shotgun permit or more than one application
158 for a muzzleloader permit shall be disqualified from the selection
159 process for such permit. No person shall hunt, pursue, wound or kill
160 deer with a bow and arrow without first obtaining a bow and arrow
161 permit pursuant to section 26-86c, as amended by this act. "Bow and
162 arrow", as used in this section and in section 26-86c, as amended by this
163 act, means a bow with a draw weight of not less than forty pounds. The
164 arrowhead shall have two or more blades and may not be less than
165 seven-eighths of an inch at the widest point. No person shall carry
166 firearms of any kind while hunting with a bow and arrow under this
167 section and section 26-86c, as amended by this act.

168 Sec. 3. Section 26-86c of the general statutes is repealed and the
169 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2023*):

170 No person may hunt deer or small game with a bow and arrow under
171 the provisions of this chapter without a valid permit issued by the
172 Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection pursuant to this
173 section or section 26-86a, as amended by this act, for persons hunting
174 deer with bow and arrow under private land deer permits issued free to
175 qualifying landowners, or their husbands or wives, parents,
176 grandparents, lineal descendants or siblings under that section. The fee
177 for such bow and arrow permit to hunt deer and small game shall be
178 forty-one dollars for residents and one hundred thirty-five dollars for
179 nonresidents, or nineteen dollars for any person twelve years of age or
180 older but under sixteen years of age, [, except that any nonresident who

181 is an active full-time member of the armed forces, as defined in section
 182 27-103, may purchase a bow and arrow permit to hunt deer and small
 183 game for the same fee as is charged a resident of the state.] Permits to
 184 hunt with a bow and arrow under the provisions of this chapter shall be
 185 issued only to qualified applicants therefor by the Commissioner of
 186 Energy and Environmental Protection, in such form as said
 187 commissioner prescribes. Applications shall be made on forms
 188 furnished by the commissioner containing such information as he may
 189 require and all such application forms shall have printed thereon: "I
 190 declare under the penalties of false statement that the statements herein
 191 made by me are true and correct." Any person who makes any material
 192 false statement on such application form shall be guilty of false
 193 statement and shall be subject to the penalties provided for false
 194 statement and said offense shall be deemed to have been committed in
 195 the town in which the applicant resides. No such application shall
 196 contain any material false statement. On and after January 1, 2002,
 197 permits to hunt with a bow and arrow under the provisions of this
 198 chapter shall be issued only to qualified applicants who have
 199 successfully completed the conservation education bow hunting course
 200 as specified in section 26-31 or an equivalent course in another state.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2023	26-28
Sec. 2	July 1, 2023	26-86a(a)
Sec. 3	July 1, 2023	26-86c

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

Sections 2 and 3 were added to conform to the change being made in Section 1.

VA *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	GF - Revenue Loss	140,000	140,000
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	GF - Potential Revenue Loss	Approximately 250,000	Approximately 250,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in an annual revenue loss of approximately \$140,000 beginning in FY 24 to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) since it reduces to 50% of the resident rate, the fees charged to veterans and active duty armed forces members for certain sporting licenses. This estimate assumes that the full eligible population under the bill would take advantage of the discounted sporting licenses. The bill may also potentially result in forgone federal revenue, of approximately \$250,000 annually beginning in FY 24.

Over the past five fiscal years, the average annual revenue collected for sporting licenses was \$7,274,124. The population pertaining to the bill's provisions is 145,387, or about 4% of the state's population. Assuming the veteran and activity duty population obtains sporting licenses at the same rate as the general population, the bill's specified fee reductions result in the estimated General Fund revenue loss discussed above.

The bill may also result in annual forgone revenue to DEEP beginning

in FY 24 in the form of federal reimbursements made from the federal Pittman-Robertson Act and Dingell-Johnson Act (known as the Wildlife Restoration Act) which helps to fund the agency's Bureau of Natural Resources, to the extent funding is provided from Congress.

Since the bill would reduce revenue from the sale of certain sporting licenses, the state would not be eligible to receive as much in federal reimbursements because the reimbursements are based on the amount of licensing revenue. In FY 22, a total of \$1.1 billion was apportioned, with Connecticut receiving approximately \$12.8 million. Based on the assumptions outlined, the magnitude of the potential federal foregone revenue could be approximately \$250,000 annually.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of eligible sportsmen and sportswomen who seek the discounted licenses.

OLR Bill Analysis**HB 6314*****AN ACT PROVIDING FOR DISCOUNTED HUNTING, TRAPPING AND FISHING LICENSES FOR VETERANS AND ACTIVE DUTY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.***

This bill reduces the fees charged to veterans and active duty armed forces members for certain sporting licenses to 50% of a Connecticut resident's cost, rounded to the next highest dollar. It applies to the fees charged to any veteran or armed forces member for (1) any firearms or archery hunting, trapping, or sport fishing license or (2) a license permit, tag, or stamp for:

1. firearm, archery, turkey, deer, or small game hunting;
2. Connecticut migratory or resident game bird conservation; and
3. sport, salmon, or trout fishing.

The bill makes conforming changes by eliminating the current provisions allowing nonresident, active full-time armed forces members to purchase deer hunting permits at the resident rate. However, it leaves unchanged a provision allowing these nonresident members to purchase any sporting license at the resident rate (see COMMENT).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023

BACKGROUND***Definition of Veteran***

By law, and under the bill, a veteran is anyone honorably discharged, released under honorable conditions, or released with an other than honorable discharge based on a "qualifying condition" from active service in the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard,

Air Force, or any of their reserve components, including the Connecticut National Guard performing certain duties (e.g., responding to certain national emergencies) (CGS § 27-103(a)). A “qualifying condition” is a (1) post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury diagnosis by a licensed health care professional at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs facility, (2) military sexual trauma disclosed to such health care professional, or (3) determination by the Eligibility Qualifying Review Board that sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression was more likely than not the primary reason for the other than honorable discharge (CGS § 27-103).

COMMENT

Conflict Between Bill and Existing Fee Reduction for Nonresident Armed Forces Members

The bill reduces the fees charged to active duty armed forces members for certain hunting and fishing licenses to 50% of the resident rate, but does not make a conforming change to an existing law that allows nonresident active duty service members to purchase any sporting license at the resident rate (CGS § 26-34a). So, it is unclear which reduced rate applies for these members.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 19 Nay 0 (02/16/2023)