

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

Legislative Office Building, Room 5200
Hartford, CT 06106 ◊ (860) 240-0200
<http://www.cga.ct.gov/ofa>

sSB-1148

AN ACT AUTHORIZING CERTAIN KILLING OF BLACK BEAR
AND PROHIBITING BIRD FEEDERS AND OTHER
UNINTENTIONAL AND INTENTIONAL FEEDING OF
POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ANIMALS.
AMENDMENT

LCO No.: 9017

File Copy No.: 518

House Calendar No.: 569

Senate Calendar No.: 314

OFA Fiscal Note

See Fiscal Note Details

The amendment strikes the underlying bill and its associated fiscal impact.

Overall, it results in costs to DEEP for grant awards in FY 24 and a commensurate revenue gain to municipalities and local councils of governments for grants through the newly established Human-Bear Conflict Reduction Community Grant Program. There is also a potential General Fund revenue gain beginning in FY 23 associated with intentionally feeding black bears.

Section 1 results in a potential revenue gain as it establishes a prohibition on intentionally feeding or enticing black bears under certain conditions and expands infractions under these scenarios.

The amendment expands violations of any regulation, from an infraction to an infraction for first violations of the amendment or regulation and establishes a \$1,000 fine for any second or subsequent violation. The amendment stipulates that each day a violation continues is considered a separate violation. Expanding these infraction

Primary Analyst: MR
Contributing Analyst(s):
Reviewer: MP

6/1/23
(FN)

provisions would be expected to result in a General Fund revenue gain beginning in FY 23 to the extent violations are enforced.

The amendment additionally requires owners of certain agricultural operations that are attracting black bears to consult with DEEP and implement reasonable nonlethal precautions. This has no fiscal impact to DEEP as it has sufficient expertise to offer guidance.

Section 2 results in costs to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) beginning in FY 24 as it requires the agency, within three months after passage of the bill and within available appropriations, to establish a pilot Human-Bear Conflict Reduction Community Grant Program and related grant application process to distribute the grant proceeds. There is no funding source established for the grant program under the amendment.

The section establishes a Connecticut Human-Bear Conflict Reduction Advisory Board within DEEP to determine the award of grants under the pilot program and evaluate the effectiveness of the grantee projects. Establishment of the board may result in costs to DEEP in FY 24 and potentially annually thereafter, estimated to be less than \$5,000 annually, associated with reimbursement for necessary expenses incurred in performing related duties.

The amendment establishes eligibility criteria under the new grant program. Further, **Section 2** requires the encouragement of matching funds, including in-kind matches, which may result in a revenue gain to DEEP, municipalities and regional councils of governments, tribes, universities and other third-party, private entities (i.e., non-profits).

The amendment establishes the range of grant awards under the program as \$50,000 to \$500,000, which would result in costs to DEEP for issuing these grants and a commensurate revenue gain to municipalities and regional councils of governments when they are the recipients.

It requires the newly established board to, no later than January 1, 2025, report to the Environment Committee on various aspects of the

newly established program. This has no fiscal impact as the board would be expected to employ expertise for this reporting requirement.

Section 3 of the amendment requires DEEP, by March 29, 2024, in consultation with a newly established working group, to adopt regulations that establish rehabilitation and other nonlethal intervention strategies for orphaned and yearling bears. This has no fiscal impact as DEEP has sufficient expertise to develop the regulations.

The preceding Fiscal Impact statement is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for the purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does 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.