



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873

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TO: Members  
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Assembly Bill 523: Resident Hunting and Fishing Approvals for Members of the Armed Forces

Assembly Bill 523 would require the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to consider a person to be a resident of the State of Wisconsin for purposes of receiving and paying for any noncommercial hunting, trapping, or fishing license if that individual could show that they were an active service member of the United States Armed Forces, and were stationed in the state. The bill was introduced on June 28, 2005, and referred to the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources. On August 31, 2005, the bill was recommended for passage by the Committee on a vote of Ayes, 15; Noes, 0. On September 9, 2005, the bill was referred to the Joint Committee on Finance.

### **CURRENT LAW**

Under current law, DNR is required to issue a resident annual fishing, small game hunting, or deer hunting license to individuals who apply for the license and show that they are a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, and are stationed within the State. In general, resident licenses and approvals are priced lower than those issued to nonresidents. Some exceptions include certain fishing and hunting stamps, which must be purchased in addition to a license or approval, and the two-day Great Lakes trout and salmon license, for which residents and nonresidents are charged the same fee.

### **SUMMARY OF BILL**

Assembly Bill 523 would require DNR to consider a person to be a resident of the State of Wisconsin for purposes of receiving and paying for any noncommercial hunting, trapping, or

fishing license if that individual could show that they were an active duty member of the United States Armed Forces, and were stationed in the state.

## **FISCAL EFFECT**

Under the bill, qualified members of the armed forces would be eligible to purchase all noncommercial hunting and fishing approvals issued by DNR at the same cost as residents. Further, for licenses where resident applicants receive preference in the allocation of approvals (such as turkey or bear hunting), qualified members of the armed forces would receive the same consideration.

The bill is expected to have a minimal fiscal effect on the Department. There would be a one-time cost of approximately \$10,000 to program the new approvals and instructions into the DNR Automated License Issuance System (ALIS). The potential change in license sales revenues as a result of the changes included in the bill is difficult to estimate, but anticipated to be minor. Currently, members of the armed services stationed in Wisconsin can purchase gun deer, archery, small game hunting, and fishing licenses (the most commonly used approvals) for the fee charged to residents. In fiscal year 2004-05, 409 approvals were sold to non-resident members of the armed forces at resident prices, including annual fishing (279), small game hunting (21), archery (18), deer gun (82), and nine sports licenses (which include deer gun, small game, and annual fishing privileges).

Since there is no way to currently track the number of nonresident members of the armed forces who purchase other hunting or fishing approvals in addition to the ones previously mentioned, it is difficult to estimate any decrease in revenue that may be caused by allowing these individuals to purchase approvals at the lower resident fee. Further, any decrease in revenue from these individuals may be offset by additional sales to armed forces members who may not previously have purchased other license types (such as turkey or bear approvals) due to the higher cost to nonresidents.

Prepared by: Rebecca Hotynski