

Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB1396 S1

Patron: Martinez

Bill Title: Department of Wildlife Resources; permits; use of dogs in hunting game animals, fur-bearing animals, and nuisance species.

Bill Summary: Directs the Department of Wildlife Resources to establish a permit for persons and a permit for organizations that hunt game animals, fur-bearing animals, or nuisance species with the aid of dogs and makes it unlawful for any person to (i) release a dog to hunt, pursue, or chase any game animal, fur-bearing animal, or nuisance species on any tract of real property or (ii) engage in hunting for any game animal, fur-bearing animal, or nuisance species with the aid of any dog unless such person has been issued a permit to hunt with dogs by the Department. The bill exempts from permitting requirements any person or organization (a) engaged in mounted fox hunting or hunting waterfowl, migratory birds, or upland game birds; (b) using a tracking dog to retrieve a wounded or dead bear, turkey, or deer; (c) whose dog remains in the immediate visual presence and control of such person or organization; (d) on public lands where hunting is allowed; (e) participating in a rabbit chase foot pack, or (f) landowners and their spouses, children, and grandchildren within the boundaries of their land. Finally, the bill subjects any person who violates the provisions of the bill to a civil penalty of no more than \$50 for a first violation and no less than \$100 but no more than \$250 for a second or subsequent violation within three years.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No

Items Impacted: None

Explanation: This bill involves the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR); however, no budget action is needed.

Fiscal Summary: It is anticipated that the bill will result in an indeterminate increase to both nongeneral fund revenue and nongeneral fund expenditures.

Fiscal Analysis: The bill directs DWR to establish individual and organizational permits for the hunting of game animals, fur-bearing animals, and nuisance species with the aid of dogs, and makes it illegal for any person to engage in hunting such animals with the aid of a dog, or release a dog to hunt, pursue, or chase such animals, without the appropriate permit, with some exceptions. DWR is also directed to promote best practices that foster effective written and verbal agreements between permit holders and landowners, and to define “rabbit chase foot pack” as used in the bill.

Any increase in workload to DWR resulting from the bill will vary based on the number of permit applications. The bill establishes a fee of \$19 per permit. DWR anticipates that any costs associated with an increased workload will be offset by the permit fee revenue.

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The bill provides that civil penalties of \$50 for an initial violation and between \$100 and \$250 for subsequent violations shall be deposited to the Game Protection Fund. The number of violations is unknown, and the revenue impact to the Fund is indeterminate.

Other: None.