

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

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB1365 ER

Patron: Fowler

Bill Title: Fishing license requirements; exemptions; free fishing days.

Bill Summary: Increases from three to six days the maximum number of free fishing days during which a person is allowed to fish without a fishing license that the Board of Wildlife Resources may designate for inland waters in the Commonwealth and the Commissioner of Marine Resources may designate for saltwater recreational fishing in the Commonwealth.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No

Items Impacted: None

Explanation: This bill impacts the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) and Marine Resources Commission (MRC); however, no budget action is needed.

Fiscal Summary: The bill may result in an indeterminate revenue impact.

Fiscal Analysis: The bill allows DWR and MRC to designate up to six days per year as “free fishing days” on which a fishing license is not required. Current law allows up to three days per year.

It is anticipated that the bill may result in a revenue impact. Some people may choose to fish only on the free days rather than paying for a license, which would result in a revenue reduction. Some people may enjoy fishing so much on the free days that they buy a license to continue fishing, resulting in increased revenue. Currently, an annual freshwater fishing license is \$23, a saltwater license is \$17.50, and a combined license is \$39.50. Temporary licenses are also available: five-day freshwater (\$14), ten-day saltwater (\$10), and five-day combined (\$24). Both DWR and MRC anticipate that this bill will not result in an expenditure impact.

Other: None.