

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

PUBLISHED: 4/2/2026 11:54 AM

ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB129 ER

Patron: Cornett

Bill Title: Deer; permit may be issued to kill if damaging residential plants and certain property.

Bill Summary: Allows the Director of the Department of Wildlife Resources or his designee to issue a permit to kill a limited number of antlered deer when such deer cause damage to residential plants and the Director or his designee determines, upon inspection, that there is clear and convincing evidence that the damage was done by antlered deer. Upon a landowner or lessee's request, the bill also requires the Director or his designee to issue a permit to kill antlerless deer on commercial agricultural production lands when such deer cause damage to fruit trees, Christmas trees, crops, horticultural plants, or personal property utilized for commercial agricultural production within the Commonwealth. When such damage is caused by antlered deer, the bill requires the Director or his designee to issue a permit to kill a limited number of antlered deer if the Director or his designee determines that there is clear and convincing evidence that the damage was done by antlered deer. The bill also changes the extent to which a person can assist in hunting when his hunting license has been revoked or suspended in the Commonwealth by prohibiting such person from assisting in hunting until the hunting restriction has been lifted. Current law allows such a person to assist in hunting after a certain period of time.

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 any fiscal impacts to DWR can be absorbed within existing appropriations.

Fiscal Analysis: The bill directs the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) to issue permits to kill deer damaging commercial agricultural crops and equipment and allows permits to be issued to kill deer damaging residential plants. According to the agency, it is anticipated that any fiscal impact resulting from this bill can be absorbed within existing resources.

Violators of these provisions are guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor. A Class 3 misdemeanor is punishable by a fine of up to \$500. These offenses carry no jail time. All revenue collected from such fines is deposited into the Literary Fund. However, because it is not possible to estimate either the number of convictions that may result or the amount of each fine that may be assessed under this legislation, the revenue impact is indeterminate.

Other: None.