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BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Fiscal Agency

Lansing, Michigan 48909

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House Bill 5661 (as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Representative Jerry C. Bartnik
House Committee: Tourism, Fisheries, and Wildlife
Senate Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

Date Completed: 5-22-90

RATIONALE

In 1988, the Wildlife Conservation Act was enacted to recodify game laws and allow the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to manage the taking of animals by issuance of orders. Since animal populations can vary greatly from area to area, or year to year, the NRC was given greater flexibility in managing game. For instance, the deer herd in certain counties is enormous, but in other counties deer are scarce, so it is not advisable to allow hunters to harvest more than one deer per season. The Hunting and Fishing Licensing Act, however, contains provisions that specify how many firearm deer licenses can be issued to a hunter and in what manner the hunter may take a second deer. These provisions conflict with the management policy established in the Wildlife Conservation Act. In 1989, the Legislature amended the Hunting and Fishing Licensing Act to delete restrictions on the use of a second bow and arrow deer license in one season, and empower the NRC to regulate the issuance and use of such a license. It has been suggested that the Hunting and Fishing Licensing Act be further amended to provide consistency with provisions in the Wildlife Conservation Act regarding the taking of deer under a second firearm deer license.

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Hunting and Fishing License Act to delete restrictions on the use of a second firearm deer license in one season, and empower the NRC to regulate the issuance and use of such a license. Currently, a second firearm deer license may be used only for a male deer with antlers at least three inches high. The

bill provides, instead, that a second license could be purchased where authorized by the Commission and that the NRC, in exercising its powers to issue orders under the Wildlife Conservation Act, could designate the kind of deer that could be taken and limit issuance of a license in areas that it considered advisable in managing deer.

MCL 316.308

FISCAL IMPACT

According to the Department of Natural Resources, the bill would have no significant revenue implications for the State.

ARGUMENTS**Supporting Argument**

Currently, the NRC, under the Hunting and Fishing License Act, does not have the flexibility to determine the method, manner, and gender of deer to be taken during the firearm season. Flexibility is needed when establishing hunting rules and regulations because animal populations can vary greatly from county to county and from year to year. The bill would provide for better population management by granting the Commission the authority to regulate the taking of a second deer during firearm season.

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H8990/S5661A

This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

H.B. 5661 (5-22-90)