

ALLOW ALTERNATE HUNTING COLORS

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House Bill 5484 as enacted
Public Act 377 of 2016
Sponsor: Rep. Lisa Lyons
House Committee: Natural Resources
Senate Committee: Outdoor Recreation and Tourism
Complete to 7-17-17

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 5484 would allow individuals to wear a color other than hunter orange while hunting if that color is approved by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC). The NRC would have to review and determine by October 1, 2017, whether hunter pink, or any additional colors, would be "effective and safe" for individuals to wear while hunting.

Presently, hunter orange is the only color that an individual is permitted to wear when taking game. The outmost layer that the individual has on must be of an eligible color. The article of clothing can be a cap, hat, vest, jacket, or rain gear. As long as camouflage is not less than 50% of an eligible hunting color, it is compliant with the color requirement.

Individuals engaging in the following activities are exempt from the color-wearing requirement:

- Taking deer with a bow or crossbow during archery deer season
- Taking bear with a bow or crossbow
- Taking turkey or migratory birds other than woodcock
- The sport of falconry
- Stationary and in the act of hunting bobcat, coyote, or fox

The bill also would add a definition of "hunter pink," which would mean "the highly visible color commonly referred to as hunter pink and includes blaze pink, flame pink, and fluorescent blaze pink."

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

In February 2016, a new law took effect in Wisconsin which allows individual to wear "hunter pink" in addition to the traditional hunter orange. During committee testimony, the bill sponsor shared a study which indicated that pink is at least as, if not more, visible to the human eye than orange, and is still undetectable by deer. As such, supporters say it should be a color individuals can wear while hunting because it remains recognizable by humans but not deer.

The DNR noted during its testimony that hunter orange has been the standard hunter safety color since the 1970s, and that it would like to study the issue for itself before giving

support to adding pink, or any other color, to the list of allowable colors to wear while hunting. Presently, that list only contains variants of the color orange.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 5484 would not affect revenues for the Department of Natural Resources. It is unclear what costs, if any, would be incurred in determining what additional colors may be worn while hunting. This bill would not affect costs or revenues for local units of government.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.