

Department of Planning and Budget 2003 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number** HB1996

House of Origin Introduced Substitute Engrossed
Second House In Committee Substitute Enrolled

2. **Patron** Ware

3. **Committee** Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

4. **Title** Recreational boat freshwater fishing license

5. **Summary/Purpose:** The bill establishes a recreational boat freshwater fishing license. Any Virginia resident owner or operator of a recreational boat used for recreational fishing in inland waters may purchase this license, which covers himself and his resident passengers while fishing from such boat, in lieu of the other fishing license requirements. The license costs \$50 a year per boat. If the owner or operator of the boat does not purchase this license, then individuals on the boat are required to purchase a fishing license as otherwise required by law. A recreational boat freshwater fishing license does not apply to designated waters stocked with trout, in waters where the Department imposes a daily fishing fee, or to nonresidents.

6. **Fiscal Impact Estimates** are not available.

7. **Budget amendment necessary:** No.

8. **Fiscal implications:** The bill would impact the fishing license revenues of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Currently, residents of the Commonwealth pay \$12.50 each year for a fishing license (\$12.00 goes to the Game Protection Fund and \$0.50 to the retailer). Such a license would reduce the department's revenue if more than four people use a boat license and thus do not have to purchase individual fishing licenses (the state receives \$12 per person for each individual license). However, there is no data to determine the number of people who would purchase a recreational boat freshwater fishing license or how many people would forgo an individual fishing license because they have access to fishing with someone who has a recreational boat license. Therefore, no fiscal impact can be determined at this time.

Any decrease in individual fishing licenses will impact federal funding for the agency. The department receives federal aid under the Sport Fish Restoration Act. The federal funding is a formula based with a significant portion of the formula dependent on the total number of license holders in a state. Therefore, if the recreational boat license causes a decrease in individual license holders the result may be less federal aid in future years.

9. **Specific agency or political subdivisions affected:** Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

10. Technical amendment necessary: No.

11. Other comments: None.

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cc:SecretaryofNaturalResources