

HUNTING LICENSE FEE CHANGES

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House Bill 6229 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Amos O'Neal
Committee: Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism
and Outdoor Recreation
Complete to 12-11-24

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

SUMMARY:

House Bill 6229 would amend the Natural Resource and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) to make changes relating to hunting, fishing, shooting, and license types and fees.

Small game hunting

Small game hunting fees would increase as follows for the base fee:

- For a resident adult, from \$10 to \$15.
- For a resident minor, from \$5 to \$8.
- For a nonresident, from \$150 to \$163.

Limited small game hunting license fees would increase as follows:

- For the three-day nonresident limited license, from \$50 to \$75.
- For the seven-day nonresident limited license, from \$80 to \$120.

For each license year, the state treasurer would have to adjust these amounts by an amount determined to reflect the cumulative percentage change in the Consumer Price Index from December 1, 2024, to the December 1 immediately preceding that license year, rounded to the nearest dollar.

Combination licenses

The bill would increase the fee for a resident combination hunting and fishing license from \$75 to \$113, and the nonresident combination license from \$265 to \$273. These fees would be adjusted annually for inflation.

Wild turkey licenses

The bill would overhaul the provisions that govern the wild turkey hunt. The current fee model would be eliminated and replaced with the following:

- The fee for a wild turkey hunting license would be increased from \$15 to \$23. (The nonresident fee would be decreased from \$69 to \$23.)
- The nonrefundable fee for entering the wild turkey hunting license lottery would be increased from \$5 to \$8.
- The bill would change the allocation of portions of the fees that go toward scientific research, biology survey work on wild turkeys, creation and management of wild turkey habitat on state land, national forest as follows:
 - For a wild turkey hunting license, from \$9.50 to \$14.
 - For a senior wild turkey hunting license, from \$1 to \$2.

- For a wild turkey hunting application, the application fee, if any, up to a maximum of \$5 (currently a maximum of \$3)

These license fees would be annually adjusted for inflation.

Waterfowl license

The fee for a waterfowl hunting license would be increased from \$12 to \$18. The bill would also increase the specific portions of this fee that fund habitat improvements. Currently, \$9 of each fee goes to acquiring, restoring, and enhancing wetlands and other lands for the benefit of waterfowl, and \$1.93 of each license fee goes toward operating, maintaining, and developing managed waterfowl areas in Michigan. The bill would increase the first allocation to \$14 and the second allocation to \$3. License fees would be annually adjusted for inflation.

Pheasant license

The fee for a pheasant hunting license would be increased from \$25 to \$38. This fee would not be adjusted for inflation. This section of NREPA is set to be repealed January 1, 2026.

Deer licenses

The fee for a deer hunting license or an antlerless deer hunting license would be increased from \$20 to \$30. The nonrefundable fee charged for an antlerless deer license would also be increased, from \$5 to \$8. Residents and nonresidents are eligible to purchase a second deer license. For nonresidents, the fee for a second license would be increased from \$170 to \$195. These fees would be annually adjusted for inflation.

Bear license

The bear hunting license fee would be increased from \$25 to \$38. The fee for a bear participation license would be increased from \$15 to \$23. These fees would be annually adjusted for inflation.

Elk license

Only a Michigan resident with a base hunting license may hunt elk. The bill would increase the cost of the elk hunting license from \$100 to \$150 and increase the nonrefundable application fee from \$5 to \$8. These fees would be annually adjusted for inflation.

Fur harvester's license

A fur harvester's license may only be purchased by an individual with a base hunting license. The bill would increase the fur harvester's license fee from \$15 to \$23 and remove a 50% discount on this license type for a minor child aged 10 or older. These fees would be annually adjusted for inflation.

All-species fishing license

The bill would increase this fee from \$25 to \$38 for residents and from \$75 to \$88 for nonresidents and change the age threshold for which a license is needed from 17 to 16. These fees would be annually adjusted for inflation.

24-hour and 72-hour fishing licenses

The 24-hour fishing license fee would be increased from \$10 to \$15. The bill would also newly restrict its availability to residents only. The bill would allow nonresidents to obtain only the

72-hour license, the fee for which it would increase from \$30 to \$60. These fees would be annually adjusted for inflation.

Modify senior discount

NREPA offers senior licenses for base licenses, deer license, wild turkey hunting, and fur harvesting. The fee of each of these is set at 60% less than the regular resident license fee. Under the bill, the discount would be 25%.

Voluntary contribution

The bill would allow the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or its agent to ask an individual if they would like make a voluntary contribution of \$25 or more to the Conservation Maintenance subaccount, which the bill would create under the Game and Fish Protection account. The DNR would have to expend money in the subaccount, upon appropriation, for costs associated with the maintenance and operation of conservation projects and associated infrastructure.

Shooting and Education Fund

The bill would create the Shooting and Education Fund in the state treasury. The DNR could charge a permit fee for the use of a state-owned shooting range, and any fees collected would be deposited in the fund. The DNR could use money from the fund, upon appropriation, for the operation and maintenance of state-owned shooting ranges and the administration of shooting education programs.

Other amendments

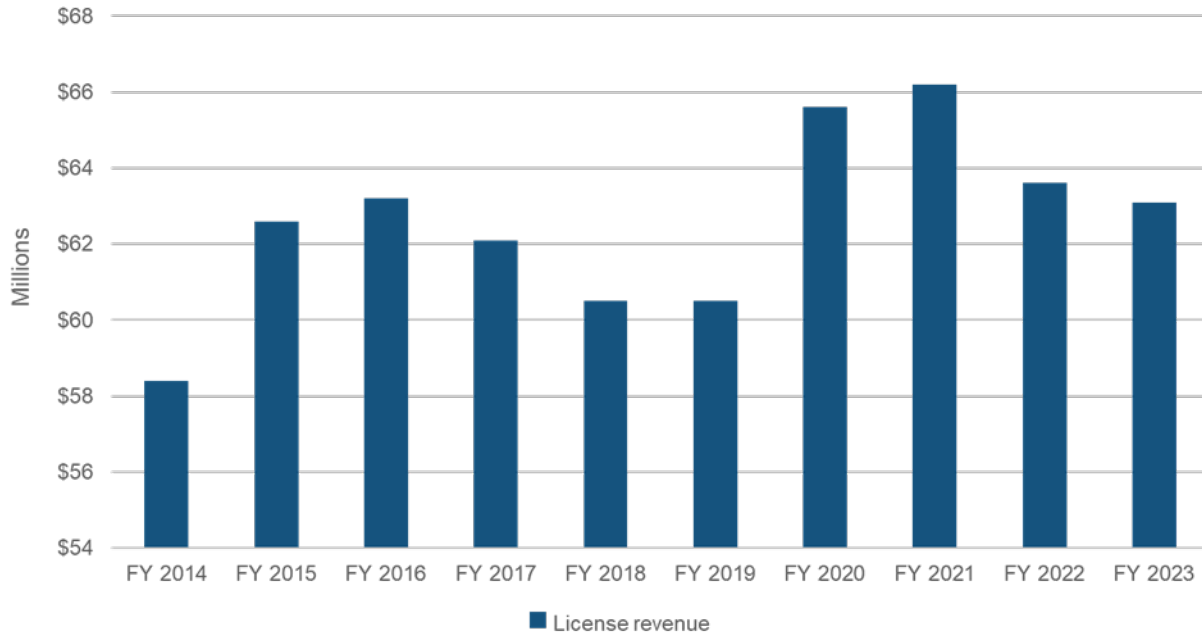
The bill would also do all of the following:

- Lower, from 17 to 16, the maximum age for an individual to take an aquatic species (other than an aquatic insect) without obtaining the necessary license.
- Increase the fee for a mentored hunting license from \$7.50 to \$11.
- Increase, from \$1 to \$2, an additional fee on base licenses for small game and to individuals eligible for a senior discount, for combination hunt and fishing licenses as well as all-species fishing licenses sold to individuals under age 17..
- Increase, from \$1 to \$2, the fee for a sport card (identification issued to an individual applying for a license or permit who does not have a Michigan driver's license or other identification).
- Allow the DNR to charge a license or permit purchaser for any credit card or commission fees incurred in a transaction.

MCL 324.43509 et seq.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 6229 is likely to increase revenue for DNR by increasing the price of certain hunting and fishing licenses. Most current license prices were set in 2013 PA 108. The precise extent of this revenue increase is unclear at present, as current purchase rates and proposed percentage price increases vary by license type. The department estimates an annual revenue increase of \$22.0 million. The chart below illustrates estimated annual revenue generated by the sale of all hunting and fishing licenses over the last decade, which has ranged between \$58.4 million and \$66.2 million.



The chart below compares current license rates with rates proposed in the bill.

Hunting Licenses	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
Base Hunting Licenses <i>Note: Must purchase base license to buy any additional specific hunting license tags; base license allows small game and non-waterfowl migratory bird hunting.</i>		
Base License; Resident	\$11.00	\$17.00
Base License; Non-Resident	\$151.00	\$165.00
Base License; Junior	\$6.00	\$6.00
Base License; Senior	\$5.00	\$13.25
Mentored Youth Hunt	\$7.50	\$11.00
Small Game Nonresident 7-day	\$80.00	\$120.00
Small Game Nonresident 3-day	\$50.00	\$75.00
Sportcard	\$1.00	\$2.00

Specific Hunting License Tags		
Antlerless Deer	\$20.00	\$20.00
Hunting License Application	\$5.00	\$8.00
Bear Harvest	\$25.00	\$38.00
Bear Participation	\$15.00	\$23.00
Deer	\$20.00	\$30.00
Deer Senior	\$8.00	\$22.50
Elk (residents only)	\$100.00	\$150.00
Fur Harvester	\$15.00	\$23.00
Fur Harvester Senior Resident	\$6.00	\$17.25
Pheasant	\$25.00	\$38.00
Turkey	\$15.00	\$23.00
Turkey Senior Resident	\$6.00	\$17.25
Waterfowl State License	\$12.00	\$18.00
Military (active duty and disabled veteran)	\$0.00	\$0.00

Fishing and Combo Licenses	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
24 hour Fishing License	\$10.00	Resident \$15.00 Nonresident \$20.00
72 hour Fishing License	\$30.00	\$60.00
Resident All-Species Fishing License	\$26.00	\$40.00
Resident All-Species Fishing License, Senior	\$11.00	\$30.50
Non-Resident All-Species Fishing License	\$76.00	\$90.00

Combination Hunting and Fishing Licenses	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
Resident: Base License, 2 Deer Licenses, All-Species Fishing License	\$76.00	\$115.00
Non-Resident: Base License, 2 Deer Licenses, All-Species Fishing License	\$266.00	\$275.00

Revenue from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses is credited to the Game and Fish Protection Account, which primarily supports appropriations in the department’s Fisheries Division, Wildlife Division, and Law Enforcement Division. A total of \$80.6 million from the fund is appropriated in the department’s FY 2024-25 budget. The bill is also likely to increase departmental revenue by providing for the collection of a state-owned shooting range user fee as well as voluntary contributions to a Conservation Maintenance Subaccount. The bill is unlikely to affect departmental costs as DNR is already engaged in the collection of these license and user-based revenues. The bill is also unlikely to affect local government costs or revenues. The department’s FY 2024-25 budget totals \$534.6 million Gross (\$76.8 million GF/GP) and 2,545.3 FTE positions.

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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.