

MINUTES OF THE SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Tyson at 8:35 a.m. on March 8, 2002 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Derek Schmidt - excused

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department
Lisa Montgomery, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Deborah McIntire, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:
Clint Riley, Department of Wildlife and Parks

Others attending: See attached list

Chairman Tyson opened the hearing on **HB 2680**.

Chairman Tyson asked Raney Gilliland (Legislative Research Department) to explain **HB 2680**. He explained that this bill would modify a number of the cash bond amounts charged for violations of Wildlife and Parks' laws. This bill is mainly directed toward nonresidents who fail to appear in court.

The first conferee and proponent was Clint Riley (Department of Wildlife and Parks) (Attachment 1). Questions and discussion followed.

Chairman Tyson closed the hearing on **HB 2680**.

Discussion and action on HB 2679—Concerning lifetime hunting, fishing, and furharvester licenses

Senator Huelskamp moved to report **HB 2679** favorably. Senator Corbin seconded. The motion passed.

Discussion on HB 2680—Relating to violations of wildlife and parks laws

Senator Downey moved to report **HB 2680** favorably. Senator Corbin seconded.

Senator Huelskamp asked that the voting be delayed until additional information is provided by the Department of Wildlife and Parks concerning trespassing. The request was duly noted by Chairman Tyson.

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 14 at 8:30 a.m.



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HOUSE BILL NO. 2680

**Testimony Provided to
Senate Committee on Natural Resources
March 8, 2002**

When a person is cited for a violation of a Wildlife and Parks law or regulation, the officer may require the person to post a cash bond to guarantee the person's appearance in court. The amount of many of these bonds are set in statute, and HB 2680 would increase these amounts.

In practice, an appearance bond is required only of nonresidents who are cited for Wildlife and Parks violations, because of the practical difficulties of obtaining a judgment against a nonresident who fails to appear in court. The bond amounts set in statute, however, have not been reexamined for eight years. In some cases, a potential lawbreaker could decide it is cost-effective to risk being caught without a required license or permit. If caught, the required bond is cheaper than the license fee, and the person would not bother to appear in court. Consequently, the threat of being caught would no longer serve as effective deterrent for this nonresident violator.

The amount of the proposed increases are intended to ensure that the bond amount would serve as an appropriate deterrent, while recognizing the various levels of seriousness for different offenses. The categories have also been reexamined in certain cases to help apply the larger increases only to the offenses deemed most important. The department requests approval of HB 2680 to help deter Wildlife and Parks violations by better ensuring that violators will be subject to appropriate penalties.

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Senate Natural Resources Committee

Date 3-8-02

Attachment # \