



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873

January 25, 2006

TO: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Assembly Bill 800: Hunter Education Certificate Requirements

Assembly Bill 800 would expand the allowable exceptions to the requirement that a Wisconsin certificate of accomplishment demonstrating completion of hunter safety education be presented prior to obtaining a hunting license. The bill was introduced on October 31, 2005, and referred to the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources. On December 14, 2005, that Committee recommended passage, by a vote of 14 to 0. On January 9, 2006, the bill was referred to the Joint Committee on Finance.

CURRENT LAW

Currently, no person born on or after January 1, 1973, may obtain any hunting license unless the person has obtained a certificate for completing a hunter education safety course approved by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. However, DNR may generally accept completion of another state's (or in some cases, province's) safety course if the course is either "recognized" or "recognized ... under a reciprocity agreement" by this state.

SUMMARY OF BILL

Assembly Bill 800 is intended to make the various references to this requirement uniform by specifying in all instances that certificates of other states, countries or provinces (rather than just other states, or states and provinces currently) may be recognized by the DNR. Further, certain references to requiring a reciprocity agreement with the other jurisdiction would be deleted. Finally, the bill would uniformly specify that a certificate, license or other evidence satisfactory to DNR indicating successful completion of hunter safety education may be used to meet the requirement (several provisions use various portions, but not all, of these terms currently).

FISCAL EFFECT

The bill would create uniform criteria that DNR may apply in accepting evidence of hunter safety education course certification in other jurisdictions in order to obtain a hunting license in Wisconsin. Provisions relating to 14- to 16-year olds hunting alone, general hunting, archery and elk licenses would be affected. Currently, these various provisions specify somewhat differing standards. The bill would generally apply the most expansive language to be used uniformly. In its fiscal note, DNR estimates it could absorb one-time costs of \$2,000 to update various publications. Further, the Department believes the expanded criteria could lead to an increase in nonresident license sales (primarily gun deer licenses) of between \$40,000 to \$80,000 annually (fish and wildlife account revenue).

Prepared by: Daryl Hinz