

SB 1517 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

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Meeting Dates: 2/7, 2/12, 2/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Allows the Department of Fish and Wildlife to issue up to 20 big game hunting tags per year to specified nonprofit entities for use by eligible combat and disabled veterans.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Sharing the existing amount of tags between terminally-ill children and disabled veterans
- Not impacting the existing program

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

[-1 amendment] Requires life insurance policies to provide at least minimum death benefit for veterans killed in action.

[-2 amendment] Expands existing ban against excluding coverage of pre-existing conditions to apply to all health insurance products for veterans with service-related pre-existing conditions.

[-5 amendment] Shortens period of incontestability of life insurance policies issued to veterans and requires such period to apply to all provisions concerning death during combat operations and/or suicide, in addition to overall validity of policy. Prohibits restart of incontestability period with renewal or reissuance of existing policy.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Fish and Wildlife currently operates a program to provide terminally-ill children with hunting and fishing opportunities at no charge, by issuing a certain number of tags to nonprofit entities that organize and sponsor such adventures.

Senate Bill 1517 is modeled after this program, to provide hunting opportunities to disabled veterans and Purple Heart recipients. A maximum of five tags may be issued to each eligible nonprofit, limited to 20 tags overall, for black bear, deer, elk, or pronghorn antelope. The total number of tags for black bear, deer, or elk in a given season, are each limited to 10; the total number of tags for antelope is limited to five; and eligible veterans may only receive one tag per year. The measure also caps the total number of tags made available to terminally-ill children at 15, and allows each program - the program for children and the program for veterans - to access the other's unused tags if they are still available 30 days prior to the relevant season.