

**MINUTES**

**MONTANA SENATE  
59th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

**FREE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON SENATE BILL 339**

**Call to Order:** By **CHAIRMAN JOE TROPILA**, on April 18, 2005 at 10:30 A.M., in Room 350 Capitol.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:**

Sen. Joseph (Joe) Tropila, Chairman (D)  
Rep. Mike Milburn, Vice Chairman (R)  
Sen. Joe Balyeat (R)  
Rep. Larry Jent (D)  
Rep. Harry Klock (R)  
Sen. Lane L. Larson (D)  
Rep. Art Noonan (D)

**Members Excused:** None.

**Members Absent:** None.

**Staff Present:**

Annie Glover, Committee Secretary  
Doug Sternberg, Legislative Branch

**Please Note.** These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

**Committee Business Summary:**

Hearing & Date Posted: SB 339, 4/15/2005  
Executive Action: SB 339

**SEN. TROPILA** called the meeting to order and asked **SEN. BALYEAT** to explain the issues before the Committee.

**SEN. BALYEAT** explained that **SB 339** needed to go to a Free Conference Committee because there was a technical amendment on the bill that did not get added in either the House or the Senate. Therefore, the issue could not be dealt with in a regular Conference Committee. This technical amendment dealt with the locations that the military personnel could obtain the discounted licenses. Fish, Wildlife and Parks did not want licensing agents at retail stores to have to handle the complications of the discounts. Also, the Committee needed to deal with the pricing of the discounted licenses. The House set the price at \$25. It had been higher in the Senate. The House tried to combine **SEN. TASH'S SB 55** that provided a free conservation license with this bill, providing a half-price sportsman's license. At \$25, the combination was not a half-price license. In addition, this bill was not coordinated with **HB 172** that increased the base price for all licenses. The department had a problem with offering a "half-price" license at \$25 when the new sportsmen's license price went up. **SEN. BALYEAT** asked **Doug Sternberg, Legislative Services Division**, to pass out amendments that changed the price from \$25 to \$30.

**EXHIBIT (frs83sb0339a01)**

**SEN. BALYEAT** asked **Mr. Sternberg** if the Committee would need to strike the House amendments before adopting the Free Conference amendments. **Mr. Sternberg** stated that would not be necessary.

**Mr. Sternberg** explained the amendments. Amendment 1 was a technical language change. In amendments 2,4 and 5 \$25 is changed to \$30. They also contain the standard additional fee of \$2 for the Department's block management program. Amendment 6 clarifies that the licenses will only be available from the main or regional Fish, Wildlife and Parks offices. The last amendment stated that the applicant is responsible for providing proof of discharge from active duty. This is standard for the Department.

**SEN. TROPILA** asked **Mr. Sternberg** if the fee increase was meant to coordinate with other legislation. **Mr. Sternberg** stated that he understood that the \$30 fee would be more in line with **HB 172**.

**SEN. TROPILA** asked **Mr. Sternberg** if that change would then negate the current fiscal note. **Mr. Sternberg** said that it would.

**SEN. TROPILA** asked **Larry Peterman, Fish, Wildlife and Parks**, for input on the amendments. **Mr. Peterman** stated that making the

licenses available only at the Department offices is a necessary step to avoid burdening the other licensing agents with the complicated discount.

**Motion:** SEN. BALLYEAT moved that SB 339 BE AMENDED WITH SB033903.ADS.

**Discussion:** SEN. BALLYEAT asked Roger Hagan, Officer and Enlisted Associations of Montana National Guard, if his organization minded the increase to \$30 plus the added \$2 increase. Mr. Hagan replied that this increase lessens the fiscal impact to the department to around \$12,000. Since this bill started with a \$250,000 estimated fiscal impact, this bill should not be a problem for the Department. The people affected by this bill will not know the difference between \$25 and \$32, they will only know that they have gotten a discount.

SEN. BALLYEAT asked Mr. Peterman that since Mr. Hagan is advocating for \$30 total, and the Department is advocating for \$31 total, if the Department would mind a compromise at \$31 total. Mr. Peterman stated that the Department could agree to that.

**Substitute Motion:** SEN. BALLYEAT made a substitute motion that SB 339 BE AMENDED WITH SB033903.ADS WHERE \$30 HAS BEEN CHANGED TO \$29. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. BALLYEAT moved that SB 339 DO PASS AS AMENDED. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 10:45 A.M.

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SEN. JOSEPH (JOE) TROPILA, Chairman

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Annie Glover , Secretary

JT/ag

Additional Exhibits:

**EXHIBIT ([frs83sb0339aad0.PDF](#))**