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- 07:19:14 Hope Stockwell, research analyst, LSD, said the public comment period for the Fish and Wildlife Licensing and Funding Advisory Council ended at the end of June. She said the advisory council met on June 24 and did not change any of its recommendations based on public comment. She said legislative staff has drafted statutory language for a bill draft based on the advisory council's recommendations.
- 07:22:23 Rep. Welborn said staff captured the intent of the advisory council recommendations in the bill draft, addressing its issues and concerns. He said the advisory council felt it necessary to keep the contingency money in the bill draft.
- 7:23:55 Charlie Sperry, responsive management supervisor, FWP, gave a summary of the 88 public comments received on-line and at the nine public meetings, [Exhibit 13](#). He said about 78% of the comments are in support of the advisory council's recommendations.
- 07:31:01 Ms. Stockwell discussed the bill draft, LC444, [Exhibit 14](#). She said the bill draft consists of four sections; switching to the 4-year funding cycle, creating a base hunting license, increasing some fees, and standardizing free and discounted licenses for youth, senior, and disabled licenses and changing some of the age requirements.
- 07:35:17 Sen. Brenden asked how much money will be generated from the base hunting license fee. Ms. Stockwell said the fee will generate \$1.47 million from residents and \$191,00 from nonresidents.
- 07:36:35 Ms. Stockwell continued review of the bill draft.
- 07:39:03 Sen. Brenden asked what the cumulative fee increase will be for increasing the resident and nonresident fishing license fees. Ms. Stockwell said the resident seasonal increase and the 2-day increase amounts to \$839,000 and the nonresident proposed increase will amount to \$2.3 million.
- 07:39:56 Ms. Stockwell continued review of the bill draft.
- 07:43:08 Sen. Brenden asked how much money will be generated if all the Class B-10 licenses are sold at the cap rate compared to the variable price licenses that were sold last year. Hank Worsech, License Bureau Chief, FWP, said he did not know, but will do the calculations.
- 07:44:38 Ms. Stockwell continued review of the bill draft.
- 07:48:39 Ms. Stockwell said the proposed fee increase from nonresident moose, sheep, mountain goat, and bison licenses will generate an estimated \$44,500.
- 07:48:50 Ms. Stockwell continued review of the bill draft.

- 07:50:46 Sen. Keane asked how 67 was determined to be the age for a senior license. Ms. Stockwell said the rationale is based on when people are eligible for full social security benefits. She said 67 is more in line with the age in other states.
- 07:51:48 Sen. Keane asked how many states have the senior age at 65 compared to 70. Ms. Stockwell gave the age requirement for the 11 states the study looked at.
- 07:53:20 Sen. Keane asked for information on the difference in revenue if the age were changed to 65.
- 07:53:57 Sen. Fielder asked if there is a grandfather clause for people who have been getting the senior discount since age 62 and who will no longer be eligible for the discount. Ms. Stockwell said there is not.
- 07:54:31 Rep. Welborn said the original Council recommendation was to put the age at 70, but, based on public comment and comments from the EQC, the age was lowered to 67.
- 07:55:08 Ms. Stockwell continued review of the bill draft.

#### **Committee questions and discussion**

- 08:04:28 Sen. Fielder asked if in section 2(1) "it is unlawful" can be changed to read "in order to be eligible for a person to apply for a hunting license". Ms. Stockwell said it can be changed. Sen. Brenden agreed.
- 08:05:43 Sen. Keane asked if the contingency money is still in the bill draft. Mr. Stockwell said it is.
- 08:06:30 Rep. White asked if there was discussion about an increase for search and rescue. Ms. Stockwell said she did not recall a discussion on that earmark. Rep. Welborn said he also did not remember a discussion on the search and rescue fee.
- 08:07:41 Sen. Fielder commented on funding for search and rescue.
- 08:08:37 Mr. Aspenlieder asked about the amount of money raised for search and rescue from the annual fees. Sue Daly, chief of Administration, FWP, said the .25 cent search and rescue earmark generates about \$100,000 a year which is put into an account dedicated for use for search and rescue clubs or hunting, fishing, or trapping missions.
- 08:09:51 Sen. Fielder asked about funding for a sheriff department involved in search and rescue. Ms. Daly said the earmark funds search and rescue, counties, and local clubs that are associated with a county.
- 08:10:27 Ms. Stockwell discussed the draft study report, [Exhibit 15](#).

08:12:55 Ms. Daly discussed options for reducing FWP expenditures if the revenue proposal from the advisory council does not move forward.

#### **Committee questions and discussion**

08:15:24 Sen. Keane asked if the bill can be presented even if the proposal does not move forward. Ms. Daly said if the bill does not pass the legislature FWP will have to reduce expenditures.

08:16:45 Sen. Brenden commented on the legislative process from when a bill is drafted until it is signed by the governor.

08:17:05 Ms. Daly said there is detailed information on the bar graphs on expenditures in the EQC binders, [Exhibit 16](#).

#### **Public comment**

08:18:15 Dave Chadwick, executive director, Montana Wildlife Federation

08:23:08 Sen. Brenden said the vote on the HB 609 bill draft and report will be done during the meeting tomorrow.

08:24:37 Mr. Kolman discussed the revisions to the SJ 15 report, Exhibit 17.

08:31:06 Sen. Brenden thanked the EQC for its work on SJ 15.

08:32:57 Sen. Brenden adjourned the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

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