

Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation

CS/HB 7021 — Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

by State Affairs Committee; Agriculture and Natural Resources Subcommittee; and Reps. Sullivan, Trumbull, and others (CS/CS/SB 680 by Appropriations Committee; Environmental Preservation and Conservation Committee; and Senator Dean)

The bill amends and repeals various statutes relating to programs under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). The bill:

- Removes specific labeling requirements for personal floatation devices and allows the use of personal floatation devices labeled in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard approval label;
- Authorizes the FWC to reimburse and compensate a citizen support organization for providing fiscal and administrative services to the commission;
- Revises the effective dates for tarpon tags from July 1 through June 30 to the calendar year;
- Removes a requirement for tax collectors to submit forms relating to the number of unissued Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) tags every year;
- Removes reporting requirements for tarpon landings;
- Corrects the scientific name for tarpon from *megalops atlantica* to the correct name, *Megalops atlanticus*;
- Removes statutory qualifying requirements to receive a Restricted Species Endorsement on a Saltwater Products License;
- Removes rulemaking authority to implement an alligator management and trapping program;
- Ensures all uncured alligator hides are identified as originally intended;
- Removes reporting and shipping details for dealers and buyers of alligator hides;
- Clarifies that a person may not take or possess an alligator or alligator eggs without an alligator license, rather than a “trapping license”;
- Renames the “Alligator Management and Trapping Program” to the “Alligator Management Program”;
- Removes statutory rulemaking authority to limit the number of participants engaged in the taking of alligators or their eggs from the wild;
- Provides exemptions to fee requirements related to hunting alligators;
- Removes statutory requirements to transfer funds from the alligator management program to the General Inspection Trust Fund to be administered by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and makes such transfers contingent upon an annual appropriation for alligator marketing and education activities;
- Removes rulemaking authority to establish appropriate qualifications for permitting alligator collectors;
- Removes a requirement to use certain funds for alligator husbandry research;
- Removes a requirement to attach CITES tags to the hide of any alligator taken from the wild;

- Removes a requirement to limit the number of CITES tags to the estimated safe yield of alligators in the state;
- Removes definitions of “alligator,” “process or processing,” and “alligator hatchling”;
- Removes a provision relating to alligator study requirements;
- Removes provisions relating to penalties for unlawfully selling certain alligator products;
- Removes a provision relating to penalties for using the words “alligator” and “gator” in certain situations; and
- Changes penalties for feeding wildlife and freshwater fish.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 115-1