

# WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

## 2022 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

### Senate Bill 163

FISCAL  
NOTE

BY SENATORS BALDWIN, LINDSAY, CAPUTO, BEACH, AND

ROMANO

[Introduced January 12, 2022; referred  
to the Committee on Natural Resources; and then to  
the Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §20-2-28 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to permitting honorably discharged veterans to hunt, trap, or fish in this state without first  
3 obtaining a license.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

## **ARTICLE 2. WILDLIFE RESOURCES.**

### **§20-2-28. When licenses or permits not required.**

1 Persons in the following categories are not required to obtain licenses or permits as  
2 indicated:

3 (a) Bona fide resident landowners or their resident children, or resident parents, or bona  
4 fide resident tenants of the land may hunt, trap or fish on their own land during open season in  
5 accordance with the laws and rules applying to the hunting, trapping and fishing without obtaining  
6 a license, unless the lands have been designated as a wildlife refuge or preserve.

7 (b) Any bona fide resident of this state who is totally blind may fish in this state without  
8 obtaining a fishing license. A written statement or certificate from a duly licensed physician of this  
9 state showing the resident to be totally blind shall serve in lieu of a fishing license and shall be  
10 carried on the person of the resident at all times while he or she is fishing in this state.

11 (c) All residents of West Virginia on active duty in the armed forces of the United States of  
12 America, while on leave or furlough, may hunt, trap or fish in season in West Virginia without  
13 obtaining a license. Leave or furlough papers shall serve in lieu of any license and shall be carried  
14 on the person at all times while trapping, hunting or fishing.

15 (d) In accordance with the provisions of §20-2-17 of this code, any resident 65 years of  
16 age or older before January 1, 2012, is not required to have a license to hunt, trap or fish during  
17 the legal seasons in West Virginia, but in lieu of the license the person shall at all times while  
18 hunting, trapping or fishing carry on his or her person a valid West Virginia driver's license or  
19 nondriver identification card issued by the Division of Motor Vehicles.

20 (e) Except as otherwise provided for in this section, residents of states that share river

21 borders with the State of West Virginia who carry hunting or fishing licenses valid in that state  
22 may hunt or fish without obtaining licenses, but the hunting or fishing shall be confined to the fish  
23 and waterfowl of the river proper and not on its tributaries: *Provided*, That the state shall first enter  
24 into a reciprocal agreement with the director extending a like privilege of hunting and fishing to  
25 licensed residents of West Virginia without requiring the residents to obtain that state's hunting  
26 and fishing licenses.

27 (f) Residents of the State of Ohio who carry hunting or fishing licenses valid in that state  
28 may hunt or fish on the Ohio River or from the West Virginia banks of the river without obtaining  
29 licenses, but the hunting or fishing shall be confined to fish and waterfowl of the river proper and  
30 to points on West Virginia tributaries and embayments identified by the director: *Provided*, That  
31 the State of Ohio shall first enter into a reciprocal agreement with the director extending a like  
32 privilege of hunting and fishing from the Ohio banks of the river to licensed residents of West  
33 Virginia without requiring the residents to obtain Ohio hunting and fishing licenses.

34 (g) Any resident of West Virginia who was honorably discharged from the Armed Forces  
35 of the United States of America ~~and who receives a veteran's pension based on total permanent~~  
36 ~~service-connected disability~~ as certified to by the Veterans Administration may hunt, trap or fish  
37 in this state without obtaining a license. The director shall propose rules for legislative approval,  
38 in accordance with ~~the provisions of~~ §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code, setting forth the procedure for  
39 the certification of the veteran, manner of applying for and receiving the certification and  
40 requirements as to identification while the veteran is hunting, trapping or fishing.

41 (h) Any disabled veteran who is a resident of West Virginia and who, as certified to by the  
42 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, is eligible to be exempt from the payment of any fee on account  
43 of registration of any motor vehicle owned by the disabled veteran as provided in §17A-10-8 of  
44 this code shall be permitted to hunt, trap or fish in this state without obtaining a license. The  
45 director shall propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with ~~the provisions of~~ §29A-3-  
46 1 *et seq.* of this code setting forth the procedure for the certification of the disabled veteran,

47 manner of applying for and receiving the certification and requirements as to identification while  
48 the disabled veteran is hunting, trapping or fishing.

49 (i) Any resident or inpatient in any state mental health, health or benevolent institution or  
50 facility may fish in this state, under proper supervision of the institution involved, without obtaining  
51 a fishing license. A written statement or certificate signed by the superintendent of the mental  
52 health, health or benevolent institution or facility in which the resident or inpatient, as the case  
53 may be, is institutionalized shall serve in lieu of a fishing license and shall be carried on the person  
54 of the resident or inpatient at all times while he or she is fishing in this state.

55 (j) Any resident who is developmentally disabled, as certified by a physician and the  
56 Director of the Division of Health, may fish in this state without obtaining a fishing license. As used  
57 in this section, "developmentally disabled" means a person with a severe, chronic disability which:

58 (1) Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or a combination of mental and  
59 physical impairments;

60 (2) Is manifested before the person attains age 22;

61 (3) Results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of  
62 major life activity:

63 (A) Self-care;

64 (B) Receptive and expressive language;

65 (C) Learning;

66 (D) Mobility;

67 (E) Self-direction;

68 (F) Capacity for independent living; and

69 (G) Economic self-sufficiency; and

70 (4) Reflects the person's need for a combination and sequence of care, treatment or  
71 supportive services which are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and  
72 coordinated.

73           (k) A student 18 years of age or younger receiving instruction in fly fishing in a public,  
74 private, parochial, or Christian school in this state may fly fish in the state for catch and release  
75 only without obtaining a fishing license while under the supervision of an instructor authorized by  
76 the school.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide all honorably discharged veterans with the right to hunt, trap or fish in this state without first obtaining a license.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.