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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD SESSION

H. F. No. 2596

03/06/2023

Authored by Wiener

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act  
1.2 relating to game and fish; requiring paperless angling, hunting, and trapping licenses  
1.3 unless requested in paper format; appropriating money; amending Minnesota  
1.4 Statutes 2022, sections 97A.045, subdivision 5; 97A.405, subdivision 2; 97A.420,  
1.5 subdivision 1.

1.6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 97A.045, subdivision 5, is amended to read:

1.8 Subd. 5. **Power to prescribe form of permits and licenses.** (a) Except as provided in  
1.9 paragraph (b), the commissioner may prescribe the form of permits, licenses, and tags issued  
1.10 under the game and fish laws.

1.11 (b) The commissioner must offer an applicant for an angling, trapping, or hunting license,  
1.12 including a special permit issued under section 97A.401, the option of receiving the license  
1.13 in either a paper or paperless format and must provide an applicant with a paperless license  
1.14 unless the applicant requests a paper license. This paragraph applies to both annual and  
1.15 lifetime licenses. The commissioner must ensure that a person authorized to issue an annual  
1.16 license described in this paragraph has the ability to issue paperless licenses.

1.17 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective March 1, 2024.

1.18 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 97A.405, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

1.19 Subd. 2. **Personal possession.** (a) A person acting under a license or traveling from an  
1.20 area where a licensed activity was performed must have in personal possession ~~either~~:

1.21 (1) the proper paper license, if the license has been issued to and received by the person;

2.1 (2) a driver's license or Minnesota identification card that bears a valid designation of  
 2.2 the proper lifetime license, as provided under section 171.07, subdivision 19; ~~or~~

2.3 (3) the proper paper license identification number or stamp validation, if the license has  
 2.4 been sold to the person by electronic means but the actual license has not been issued and  
 2.5 received; or

2.6 (4) electronic or other evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that the person has the  
 2.7 proper paperless license.

2.8 (b) If possession of a license or a license identification number is required, a person  
 2.9 must exhibit, as requested by a conservation officer or peace officer, ~~either~~: (1) the proper  
 2.10 paper license if the license has been issued to and received by the person; (2) a driver's  
 2.11 license or Minnesota identification card that bears a valid designation of the proper lifetime  
 2.12 license, as provided under section 171.07, subdivision 19; ~~or~~ (3) the proper paper license  
 2.13 identification number or stamp validation and a valid state driver's license, state identification  
 2.14 card, or other form of identification provided by the commissioner, if the license has been  
 2.15 sold to the person by electronic means but the actual license has not been issued and received;  
 2.16 or (4) electronic or other evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that the person has the  
 2.17 proper paperless license. A person charged with violating the license possession requirement  
 2.18 shall not be convicted if the person produces in court or the office of the arresting officer,  
 2.19 the actual license previously issued to that person, which was valid at the time of arrest, or  
 2.20 satisfactory proof that at the time of the arrest the person was validly licensed. Upon request  
 2.21 of a conservation officer or peace officer, a licensee shall write the licensee's name in the  
 2.22 presence of the officer to determine the identity of the licensee.

2.23 (c) Except as provided in paragraph (a), ~~clause~~ clauses (2) and (4), if the actual license  
 2.24 has been issued and received, a receipt for license fees, a copy of a license, or evidence  
 2.25 showing the issuance of a license, including the license identification number or stamp  
 2.26 validation, does not entitle a licensee to exercise the rights or privileges conferred by a  
 2.27 license.

2.28 (d) A paper license issued electronically and not immediately provided to the licensee  
 2.29 shall be mailed to the licensee within 30 days of purchase of the license. A pictorial migratory  
 2.30 waterfowl, pheasant, trout and salmon, or walleye stamp shall be provided to the licensee  
 2.31 after purchase of a stamp validation only if the licensee pays an additional fee that covers  
 2.32 the costs of producing and mailing a pictorial stamp. A pictorial turkey stamp may be  
 2.33 purchased for a fee that covers the costs of producing and mailing the pictorial stamp.  
 2.34 Notwithstanding section 16A.1283, the commissioner may, by written order published in

3.1 the State Register, establish fees for providing the pictorial stamps. The fees must be set in  
3.2 an amount that does not recover significantly more or less than the cost of producing and  
3.3 mailing the stamps. The fees are not subject to the rulemaking provisions of chapter 14, and  
3.4 section 14.386 does not apply.

3.5 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective March 1, 2024.

3.6 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 97A.420, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

3.7 Subdivision 1. **Seizure.** (a) An enforcement officer shall immediately seize the license  
3.8 of a person who unlawfully takes, transports, or possesses wild animals when the restitution  
3.9 value of the wild animals exceeds \$500. Except as provided in subdivisions 2, 4, and 5, the  
3.10 person may not use or obtain any license to take the same type of wild animals involved,  
3.11 including a duplicate license, until an action is taken under subdivision 6. If the license  
3.12 seized under this paragraph was for a big game animal, the license seizure applies to all  
3.13 licenses to take big game issued to the individual. If the license seized under this paragraph  
3.14 was for small game animals, the license seizure applies to all licenses to take small game  
3.15 issued to the individual.

3.16 (b) In addition to the license seizure under paragraph (a), if the restitution value of the  
3.17 wild animals unlawfully taken, possessed, or transported is \$1,000 or more, all other game  
3.18 and fish licenses held by the person shall be immediately seized. Except as provided in  
3.19 subdivision 2, 4, or 5, the person may not obtain any game or fish license or permit, including  
3.20 a duplicate license, until an action is taken under subdivision 6.

3.21 (c) A person may not take wild animals covered by a license seized under this subdivision  
3.22 until an action is taken under subdivision 6.

3.23 (d) The commissioner must make a means of seizing and releasing a paperless license  
3.24 under this section available to enforcement officers.

3.25 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective March 1, 2024.

3.26 Sec. 4. **APPROPRIATION; PAPERLESS LICENSING CAPABILITIES.**

3.27 \$..... in fiscal year 2024 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of  
3.28 natural resources to develop the infrastructure, processes, and capabilities needed to issue  
3.29 and administer electronic hunting, trapping, and angling licenses, as required by Minnesota  
3.30 Statutes, section 97A.045, beginning March 1, 2024. This is a onetime appropriation.