

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 684

BY REPRESENTATIVE RISER

HUNTING: Provides relative to bear hunting

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 47:463.45(C)(1) and R.S. 56:10(B)(9) and 291 and to enact R.S.  
3 56:103(D), 116.3(I), 3002(A)(6), and 3007(H), relative to bear hunting; to provide  
4 for the use of funds in the Conservation Fund black bear account; to provide relative  
5 to bear hunting licenses; to establish fees for bear hunting licenses; to authorize the  
6 Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to create a bear harvest permit lottery; to  
7 authorize the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to auction one  
8 bear harvest permit; to establish a lottery application fee; to dedicate funds to the  
9 black bear account; to allow the feeding of wild bears for purposes of baiting; and  
10 to provide for related matters.

11 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

12 Section 1. R.S. 47:463.45(C)(1) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

13 §463.45. Special prestige license plates; Louisiana black bear

14 \* \* \*

15 C.(1) Except as provided in Paragraph (2) of this Subsection, the revenues  
16 realized from the additional twenty-six dollar fee imposed by Subsection B of this  
17 Section shall be remitted to the state as provided by law. The state treasurer shall  
18 place an amount equal to those revenues in the Conservation Fund, after complying  
19 with the requirements of R.S. 56:10(B), and shall credit that amount to the "black  
20 bear account" which is created within the Conservation Fund through the provisions

1 of R.S. 56:10(B)(9). ~~The funds raised from the license plate sales shall be used~~  
2 ~~solely for nongame purposes.~~

3 \* \* \*

4 Section 2. R.S. 56:10(B)(9) and 291 are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.  
5 56:103(D), 116.3(I), 3002(A)(6), and 3007(H) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

6 §10. Annual report to governor; estimate of proposed expenditures; particular funds;  
7 limitations on purposes for use of monies in particular funds and accounts;  
8 warrants; vouchers; surplus funds

9 \* \* \*

10 B.

11 \* \* \*

12 (9) There is hereby created within the Conservation Fund a special account  
13 known as the "black bear account". The revenues shall be subject to the same  
14 requirements as provided for other revenues placed in the Conservation Fund in  
15 Paragraph (1) of this Subsection. The funds in this account shall be used solely for  
16 the purpose of managing, conserving, restoring, and enhancing black bear ~~habitat~~ in  
17 Louisiana.

18 \* \* \*

19 §103. License required

20 \* \* \*

21 D. In order to hunt, take, possess, or transport black bear in Louisiana, in  
22 addition to a basic hunting license, a resident shall be required to purchase and have  
23 on his person a black bear hunting license.

24 \* \* \*

25 §116.3. Special provisions applicable to deer and bear; times and methods of taking;  
26 penalties

27 \* \* \*

28 I.(1) No person shall hunt or take bear without a bear hunting license and a  
29 bear harvest permit. The commission shall promulgate and adopt rules and

1 regulations to establish a lottery for the selection and issuance of bear harvest  
2 permits. There shall be a fifty dollar nonrefundable entry fee for bear harvest permit  
3 lottery applications. Bear harvest permits and tags may be issued to successful and  
4 eligible lottery applicants at no cost.

5 (2) In addition to the lottery provided for in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection,  
6 the secretary may provide for the issuance of a single bear harvest permit to be  
7 subject to auction by the department, or by an incorporated nonprofit organization  
8 dedicated to the conservation of fish and wildlife resources, as determined by the  
9 department, which may be sold to the highest eligible bidder.

10 (3) All revenues derived from lottery applications and auction proceeds shall  
11 be deposited into the black bear account created within the Conservation Fund  
12 through the provisions of R.S. 56:10(B)(9) and be used exclusively for managing,  
13 conserving, restoring and enhancing black bear in Louisiana.

14 \* \* \*

15 §291. Feeding of wild bears prohibited

16 No person shall intentionally feed or attempt to feed a wild bear. The  
17 provisions of this Section shall not apply to baiting of bears by properly licensed  
18 hunters in possession of a bear harvest permit and shall not prohibit legal baiting of  
19 deer. The first violation of this Section by any person shall result in the issuance of  
20 a warning ticket only. Any subsequent violation by the same person shall be a class  
21 two violation. The Wildlife and Fisheries Commission is authorized to promulgate,  
22 under the Administrative Procedure Act, rules and regulations for the administration  
23 and enforcement of this Section.

24 \* \* \*

25 §3002. Recreational hunting licenses; fees

26 A. Resident licenses:

27 \* \* \*

28 (6) Bear hunting license \$25.00/year

29 \* \* \*

1 §3007. Dedication of license revenue

2 \* \* \*

3 H. All funds received from the sale of bear hunting licenses shall be  
4 deposited into the black bear account created within the Conservation Fund through  
5 the provisions of R.S. 56:10(B)(9).

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 684 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Riser

**Abstract:** Authorizes black bear hunting, establishes license requirements, authorizes the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to establish a lottery, authorizes the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to auction for black bear harvest permits, and allows dedicated black bear funds to be used for management, conservation, restoration, and enhancement of the black bear.

Present law creates a black bear account within the Conservation Fund with a restriction that funds in the account only be used for conserving, restoring, and enhancing black bear habitat.

Proposed law removes the requirement that funds in the black bear account be used solely for habitat and adds a permitted use for managing black bears, so the funds may be spent on managing, conserving, restoring, and enhancing the black bear in the state.

Present law creates a special prestige license plate for the La. black bear and directs that the fees received through the sale of this plate be credited to the black bear account in the Conservation Fund.

Present law further requires that the funds from the license plate can only be used for nongame purposes.

Proposed law removes the restriction on funds being used only for nongame purposes.

Proposed law requires a basic hunting license, a bear hunting license, and a bear harvest permit to hunt and take black bears.

Proposed law authorizes the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to establish a lottery for bear harvest permits and establishes a \$50 fee for lottery applications.

Proposed law further authorizes the secretary of the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to auction a single bear harvest permit to the highest bidder.

Proposed law requires that all revenue received from the sale of lottery applications and from the auction of bear permits be deposited in the black bear account in the Conservation Fund.

Present law prohibits the feeding of wild bears.

Proposed law provides an exception to this prohibition for baiting of bears by properly licensed and permitted hunters.

Present law establishes fees for recreational hunting licenses and dedicates license revenue.

Proposed law establishes a \$25 fee for resident bear hunting licenses and dedicates the revenue from bear hunting licenses to the black bear account in the Conservation Fund.

(Amends R.S. 47:463.45(C)(1) and R.S. 56:10(B)(9) and 291; Adds R.S. 56:103(D), 116.3(I), 3002(A)(6), and 3007(H))