

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 153 (HB 543)

2024 Regular Session

Zeringue

Existing law provides for recreational fishing licenses and fees, including saltwater licenses and charter guide fishing licenses for residents and nonresidents.

Existing law requires that \$7.50 must be collected for every recreational charter fishing license sold and be deposited into the Charter Boat Fishing Fund for the purposes of promoting charter fishing, among other things.

Prior law established recreational charter fishing license fees that included the \$7.50 promotion fee, specifically, a \$20 fee for three-day saltwater charter fishing licenses and a \$10 fee for three-day freshwater charter fishing licenses.

New law separates the \$7.50 charter promotion fee from the recreational charter fishing license fees so that it can be deposited directly into an escrow account for promotional use pursuant to existing law.

New law therefor provides for a \$12.50 three-day saltwater charter fishing license and a \$2.50 three day freshwater charter fishing license and the \$7.50 charter promotion fee required under existing law will be collected in addition to these base fees under new law.

Prior law establishes a Charter Boat Fishing Fund within the Conservation Fund for the deposit of monies to be used by the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries for the promotion of the charter boat industry, protection of the fishery, and administrative costs of the fund. Prior law further provides that these funds are to be expended for such purposes through the Louisiana Charter Boat Association.

New law changes the Charter Boat Fishing Fund to the Charter Boat Fishing Escrow Account, requires that charter promotion fees collected under R.S. 56:302.9 (\$500 fee for nonresident charter guide licensees) and R.S. 56:3001 (\$7.50 for each recreational charter fishing license) be deposited into this escrow account.

New law removes the department from administration of these funds and requires that the monies in the escrow account be used by the La. Charter Boat Association directly for the uses established under existing law.

Prior law required that 10% of all annual charter guide license fees collected be deposited into the Charter Boat Fishing Fund and that the remainder be deposited into the Conservation Fund.

New law repeals the dedication of 10% of annual charter guide license fees to the Charter Boat Fishing Fund and requires that all revenue from charter guide licenses except for the charter promotion fees paid by nonresidents be deposited into the Conservation Fund.

Prior law required that nonresident charter fishing guides pay \$500 in addition to their annual charter guide license fee which was dedicated to the Charter Boat Fishing Fund.

New law retains the \$500 fee and dedicates the fee to the Charter Boat Fishing Escrow Account.

New law also reinstates provisions of prior law regarding the options available for licensing when saltwater fishing.

Effective August 1, 2024.

(Amends Act No. 356 of the 2021 R.S., §6 and R.S. 56:10(B)(1)(f), 302.9(B), (C)(3)(c), and (G), and 3001(A)(4) and (5) and (B)(5) and (6); Adds R.S. 56:302.1 and 3001(A)(6) and (B)(7); Repeals R.S. 56:3007(C))