

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

HB 688

2026 Regular Session

Orgeron

Present law provides definitions for freshwater and saltwater game fish.

Proposed law would have retained present law and added Atlantic tarpon to the definition of saltwater game fish.

Proposed law would have updated the scientific names of saltwater game fish included in present law.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Proposed to amend R.S. 56:8(70)(b))

VETO MESSAGE:

"I am notifying you that I have vetoed House Bill 688 from the 2026 Regular Session by Representative Joseph Orgeron.

House Bill 688 is a solution in search of a problem. This proposed bill would make Atlantic tarpon a saltwater game fish. This legal designation is completely unnecessary since our anglers already treat tarpon as a catch-and-release sport fish in Louisiana.

I can discern no corresponding conservation benefit in this designation. There is no real harvest pressure on tarpon, and nothing in the science suggests we need new limits or restrictions to protect them. Louisiana's anglers do not need more regulatory hurdles for their recreational activities.

Creating this unnecessary legal designation could also lead to future regulations that do not actually help conservation. Once something becomes a statutory game fish, it often comes with size limits, possession limits, or gear rules. For tarpon, none of that would provide a real benefit, but it could limit our sportsman's time on the water.

I'm always willing to support more research when there's a real need, but I'm not willing to add red tape just for the sake of doing something. Regulation for the sake of regulation is not the way we should govern. My administration will keep fighting to make sure Louisiana's fisheries remain open, abundant, and accessible for our citizens and future generations.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill No. 688 of the 2026 Regular Session."