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## DIGEST

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HB 636 Original

2016 Regular Session

Leopold

**Abstract:** Increases the fee for an oyster seed ground vessel permit and provides for an apprentice program for eligibility for the permit

Present law requires possession of an oyster seed ground vessel permit for any vessel carrying or harvesting oysters from a public natural reef or oyster seed ground. Provides that the fee for such permit is \$15 for Louisiana residents and \$60 for nonresidents. Allowed application for the vessel permit up to Dec. 31, 2012, but prohibited any applications thereafter. Sunsets the existence of the permit beginning Nov. 15, 2016.

Proposed law increases the fees for the permits for a single scraper vessel to \$250 for residents and \$1,000 for nonresidents and for a double scraper vessel to \$500 for residents and \$2,000 for nonresidents. Dedicates all the fees derived from sale of the permits to the Public Oyster Seed Ground Development Account.

Proposed law authorizes, notwithstanding the date limitation contained in present law, a person who owns an oyster vessel who has satisfactorily completed the requirements of a professionalism program to submit an application for a seed ground vessel permit. Requires the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to develop, establish, and monitor a professionalism program to train vessel owners in appropriate methods and practices of oyster harvest from the public seed grounds.

Proposed law repeals the Nov. 15, 2016, sunset date.

(Amends R.S. 56:433.1(A)(1) and (2); Adds R.S. 56:433.1(B)(4); Repeals R.S. 56:433.1(E))