Senate Ways and Means Committee

Sonja Caldwell 271-2117

HB 647-FN, relative to the fee for a newborn lifetime hunting and fishing license.

Hearing Date: April 16, 2025

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Lang, Murphy, Sullivan, Rosenwald and Fenton

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill allows the director of the fish and game commission to set the rate for lifetime hunting and fishing licenses for newborns through regulations.

Sponsors:

Rep. Spillane	Rep. Darby	Rep. Love
Rep. Popovici-Muller	Rep. Potucek	Rep. Ulery
Rep. Coker	Rep. Khan	Rep. Gagne
Sen. Innis	Sen. McGough	Sen. Sullivan

Who supports the bill: Rep. Popovici-Muller, Sen. McGough

Who opposes the bill: Sarahlynn Williams

Who is neutral on the bill: no one

Summary of testimony presented in support:
Rep. Daniel Popovici-Muller, Prime Sponsor

- HB 647 originated from a statutorily created committee last fall that reviewed revenues for Fish and Game.
- There were concerns about the $300 statutory fee for a lifetime license issued to a newborn (ages 0–1).
- All other lifetime license fees can be set by the Executive Director of Fish and Game based on actual studies.
- The current $300 fee may be too low to cover the cost of the license.
- By comparison, the resident lifetime license for a sixteen-year-old costs $1,565.
- It would be more prudent to allow the director to set the newborn rate pursuant to data-driven studies.
- This program has significantly helped Fish and Game by providing a separate revenue stream to cover future license holders.

- HB 647 would give Fish and Game more flexibility in issuing these licenses.
- HB 647 passed 15–0 in committee and passed the House on a voice vote.

Senator Fenton asked for clarification that New Hampshire currently has a lifetime fishing and hunting license.
Rep. Popovici-Muller responded that yes, it does.

Senator Fenton followed up by asking if Rep. Popovici-Muller knew the current rate for the lifetime license.
Rep. Popovici-Muller responded that the rate varies by age. It starts at $1,565 for a sixteen-year-old. He noted that he himself is 57 and would pay $530 for the same license. The cost decreases with age, based on the expectation that the license will be used less. He added that it is more efficient to charge once than have individuals reapply annually.

Senator Lang informed Senator Fenton that the last paragraph of the fiscal note contains the information he might be looking for.

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