

Senate Fiscal Agency
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SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

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Senate Bill 974 (as passed by the Senate)
Sponsor: Senator Leon Stille
Committee: Hunting, Fishing and Forestry

Date Completed: 5-11-98

RATIONALE

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, which regulates the taking of game in the State, allows a person to hunt with a firearm, a slingshot, a bow and arrow, a crossbow, or a trap. A person also may use a dog, raptor, or other wild or domestically trained animal to assist in the kill, chase, harassment, pursuit, entrapment, capture, or collection of game. The Act restricts the use of artificial light to locate game during December to November between specific night hours. Some people believe, however, that platform use for lawful firearm hunting would be a reasonable accessory to aid hunters in locating game and should be allowed.

CONTENT

The bill would amend Part 401 (Wildlife Conservation) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow an individual to use a platform for lawful firearm hunting. An individual under 18 years old would have to be secured by a safety belt or harness while on the platform.

The term "platform" would mean a raised horizontal surface constructed or erected by a person that would increase the person's field of vision using the horizontal surface beyond the field of vision that would normally be attained by that person standing on the ground.

Proposed MCL 324.40113b

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

The use of a platform for lawful firearm hunting would be a fair method of taking of game. By increasing a hunter's field of vision, a firearm platform would enhance the hunter's skill and ability to shoot game successfully. The bill would complement an order issued recently by the Natural Resources Commission that allows firearm deer hunters and firearm bear hunters to use firearm platforms beginning this fall.

Response: The Commission also is considering a ban on any attachments such as spikes or screw-in steps that are used by hunters to gain access to elevated platforms.

Legislative Analyst: N. Nagata

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: G. Cutler

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.