

**ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION - 2023**  
**COMMITTEE STATEMENT**  
**LB425**

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**Hearing Date:** Thursday February 09, 2023  
**Committee On:** Natural Resources  
**Introducer:** Bostelman  
**One Liner:** Change provisions relating to the Game and Parks Commission and the Game Law

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**Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:**

Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

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**Vote Results:**

**Aye:** 8 Senators Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, J., Fredrickson, Hughes, Jacobson, Moser, Slama

**Nay:**

**Absent:**

**Present Not Voting:**

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**Testimony:**

**Proponents:**

Senator Bruce Bostelman  
Timothy McCoy  
Scott Smathers

**Representing:**

Introducer  
Nebraska Game & Parks Commission  
Nebraska Sportsmen's Foundation; Big Game Conservation Association

**Opponents:**

Michael Ryan

**Representing:**

Self

**Neutral:**

**Representing:**

\* ADA Accommodation Written Testimony

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**Summary of purpose and/or changes:**

LB425, brought by Sen. Bostelman, would amend provisions of the Game Law found in Chapter 37 to raise nonresident hunting and fishing permit fees for persons sixteen years and older, to raise the cap on fees for nonresident single, multiple day, and annual fishing permits, permits issued for special depredation seasons. The bill also expands the percentage of land in a county that is for breeding and controlled shooting and increases the number of permits the commission to "as many as necessary" that may issue for the harvest of animal predators in areas of a state game refuge.

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**Explanation of amendments:**

AM1010 is a white copy amendment to LB425 that also incorporates two other bills into LB425: LB400 (As amended by AM878) and LB281 (As amended by AM911).

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The Committee voted to adopt AM1010 on a 8-0 vote.

LB400, introduced by Sen. Brewer, and amended by AM878 would replace the seasonal Pheasant Bounty Program with provisions for the reduction of nest predators year-round by authorizing landowners, their tenants, or agent, to destroy or have destroyed any predator preying on livestock or poultry or suspected of causing other damage on their land. It also would authorize landowners, their tenants or agents to kill a mountain lion if encountered and the mountain lion is in the process of stalking, killing, or consuming livestock on the person's property and requires the person responsible for killing the mountain lion to notify the Commission immediately and to arrange to transfer the mountain lion to the Commission.

Motion to include LB400 as amended in Committee Amendment AM1010

Vote Results: 8-0-0-0

Voting Aye: Senators Bostelman, Brandt, J. Cavanaugh, Fredrickson, Hughes, Jacobson, Moser & Slama

Voting Nay: None

Present, Not Voting: None

Absent: None

Testifiers on LB400 on 2/8/23:

Proponents -

Senator Tom Brewer, Introducer

Michael Herring, Self

John Ross, Self

Ken Lamb, Self

Spike Eickholt, Self

Opponents -

Alicia Hardin, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission

Drew Larsen, Pheasants Forever

Laura Stastny, Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Inc.

Scott Smathers, Nebraska Sportsmen's Foundation

Jarel Vinduska, Self

Scott Lickteig, Self

Katie Torpy, Nature Conservancy

Al Davis, Nebraska Chapter Sierra Club

John Hansen, Nebraska Farmers Union

Joel Sartore, Self

Neutral -

Bill Hawkins, Self

Michael Ryan, Self

LB281 introduced by Sen. Jacobson, and amended by AM911, would direct the Department of Economic Development (DED) to make a matching grant of up to \$15 million to a non-profit sponsored project to rebuild a youth outdoor education camp facility if damaged due to a natural or manmade disaster. The grant would be matched dollar for dollar by the applicant and require proof of matching funds prior to disbursement of any portion, and also require proof of expenses consistent with the grant's purpose and within the grant's approved expense categories.

Motion to include LB281 as amended in Committee Amendment AM1010

Vote Results: 8-0-0-0

Voting Aye: Senators Bostelman, Brandt, J. Cavanaugh, Fredrickson, Hughes, Jacobson, Moser & Slama

Voting Nay: None

Present, Not Voting: None

Absent: None

Testifiers on LB281 on 2/15/23:

Proponents -

Senator Mike Jacobson, Introducer

Jeff Yost, Nebraska Community Foundation

Brad Mellema, Self

Cay Ewoldt, Self

Brenda Masek, Self

Al Davis, Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska & Nebr. Chapter Sierra Club

Carol Thompson, Self

Nancy Furman, Self

Jami Biodrowski, Easter Seals Nebraska Camp & Respite

Susan Littlefield, Nebraska 4-H Foundation Board of Trustees

James Dukesherer, Nebraska Rural Electric Association

Seth Barnes, Self

Alexa Spurlin, Nebraska Association of Resources Districts

Jason Smith, Nebraska State Alliance of YMCA's

Sheridan Swotek, Self

Shawn Pollock, Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards

Cilinda Meyer-Scheideler, Self

Delaney Rogers, Self

Aaron Barrow, City of Blair

Twyla Witt, Self

Tom Witt, Thomas County Visitors Committee

Opponents - None

Neutral - None

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Section by Section of AM1010:

Sections 1-9 and 11 (LB425) Amend various sections of Chapter 37

Sec. 1 Amends 37-104 to correct quorum requirement from 4 to 5 of the 9-member board

Sec. 2 Amends section 37-407 raises non-resident fees for hunting stamps and permits

Amends 37-407(4) (b) (i) to increase caps for nonresident fees by 30%.

Fee Changes:

Nonresident permit	Current cap	Current fee	Proposed New Cap
Annual Hunt	\$106	\$106	\$138
2-day Hunt	\$73	\$73	\$95
Annual Fish	\$66	\$66	\$86
1-day Fish	\$12	\$11.50	\$15
3-day Fish	\$22	\$19	\$29
Annual Hunt/Fish	\$159	\$159	\$207
Turkey	\$126	\$125	\$164
Antelope	\$198	\$198	\$257

Deer                      \$284              \$282              \$369

Sec. 3 Amends section 37-447 limiting and raising non-resident permit fees for deer hunting

Sec. 4 Amends section 37-448 special seasons may be designated, with the only limitations on nonresident permits

Sec. 5 Amends section 37-449, (2) to raise caps on permits issued from one hundred ninety eight dollars to two hundred fifty-seven dollars for a nonresident deer permit.

Sec. 6 Amends section 37-449, section 37-327 to raise caps on non-resident permit fees for antelope hunting from \$198 to \$257

Sec. 7 Amends 37-453 to increase limit on number of applications for special permits from two to six.

Sec. 8 Amends 37-457 raising cap on nonresident permits for wild turkey hunting.

Sec. 9 Amends section 37-492 to expand maximum game breeding and controlled shooting areas from two percent of total acreage of the county to five percent.

Sec. 11 Amends Section 37-708 regarding unlawful activities within bounds of state game refuges.

Section 10 (LB400) as amended by AM878 Previously Pheasant Restoration Act amended to eliminate Bounty Program and authorize year-round harvest of nest predatory animals and mountain lions under specific conditions.

Section 12-14 (LB281) as amended by AM911 (Youth Outdoor Education Innovation Grant & Fund)

Sec. 12 Definitions; guidelines for grant at subsections (2)-(6)

Sec. 13 Creates the Youth Outdoor Education Innovation Fund.

Sec. 14 Amends section 84-612 by adding subsection (19) that directs transfer of \$15 million from Cash Fund to Youth Outdoor Education Innovation Fund

Sec. 15 Repealer

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Bruce Bostelman, Chairperson