_____ BILL NO. _____

INTRODUCED BY _____

BY REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PARKS

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: “AN ACT REVISING REQUIREMENTS FOR HUNTING AND TRAPPING APPRENTICE CERTIFICATES; REVISING LICENSE REQUIREMENTS FOR HUNTING AND TRAPPING MENTORS; CLARIFYING LICENSES THAT CAN BE HELD BY A PERSON WHO OBTAINS A HUNTING APPRENTICE CERTIFICATE; AMENDING SECTION 87-2-810, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE.”

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 87-2-810, MCA, is amended to read:

"**87-2-810. Apprentice certificate.** (1) A person who is 10 years of age or older and who has not completed a hunter safety and education course pursuant to 87-2-105 or a trapper education course pursuant to 87-2-127 is eligible to use an apprentice certificate that entitles the holder to obtain and use hunting licenses and permits or a Class C or Class C-2 trapping license in accordance with this title and the provisions of this section.

(2) A person may obtain an apprentice certificate for no more than 2 license years before the person shall complete a Montana hunter safety and education course pursuant to 87-2-105 to be eligible for hunting licenses or a trapper education course pursuant to 87-2-127 to be eligible for trapping licenses. Completing a Montana hunter safety and education course or a trapper education course prior to turning 12 years of age does not prevent a person who is at least 10 years of age from being eligible to obtain and use licenses pursuant to this section.

(3) A person who obtains an apprentice certificate must be in the company of a mentor when hunting and trapping and shall conduct all hunting and trapping in accordance with this section and within the terms and conditions of the license or permit issued.

(4) To qualify as a mentor who will accompany an apprentice, a person must:

(a) be at least 21 years of age;

(b) if the apprentice is under 18 years of age, be related to the apprentice by blood, adoption, or marriage, be the legal guardian of the apprentice, or be a person designated by a parent or legal guardian as being capable and qualified to assist the apprentice;

(c) if serving as a hunting mentor, have completed a hunter safety and education course pursuant to 87-2-105 ~~and~~ or have a current Montana hunting license;

(d) if serving as a trapping mentor, have completed a trapper education course pursuant to 87-2-127 ~~and~~ or have a current Montana trapping license;

(e) have agreed to accompany and supervise the apprentice and remain within sight of and direct voice contact with the apprentice at all times while in the field; and

(f) confirm that the apprentice possesses the physical and psychological capacity to safely and ethically engage in hunting and trapping activities.

(5) Subject to the conditions of this section, the department shall issue an apprentice certificate on payment of a fee of $5. This fee must be deposited in the state special revenue fund account to the credit of the department for hunter education purposes.

(6) The department shall issue an apprentice certificate that allows an apprentice to be accompanied by multiple mentors.

(7) Except as provided in subsection (8), a person who obtains an apprentice certificate may purchase any unlimited hunting license or permit by any applicable deadline for the fee established pursuant to this chapter, including a reduced cost license for which the applicant qualifies. An apprentice who is under 12 years of age is eligible to obtain the unlimited reduced cost licenses available to a person who is 12 years of age.

(8) A person who obtains ~~an~~ a hunting apprentice certificate is not eligible:

(a) to obtain a Class A-2 special bow and arrow license without having:

(i) completed a bowhunter education course; and

(ii) turned 12 years of age by January 16 of the license year;

(b) to obtain a black bear license;

(c) to obtain a mountain lion license;

(d) to obtain a Class D-3 resident hound training license;

(e) to obtain a wolf license;

(f) to participate in a drawing with a limited quota;

(g) to obtain a mountain sheep license in any area where the licenses are issued in unlimited number; or

(h) to obtain an elk license if the [apprentice] is under 15 years of age.

(9) An apprentice who violates the terms of this section or a mentor who violates the terms of this section while accompanying an apprentice is subject to the loss of privileges granted by this section for up to one full license season."

NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

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