Office of Senate Floor Analyses
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THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1056
Author: Bennett (D)
Amended: 5/1/25 in Assembly
Vote: 21

SENATE NATURAL RES. & WATER COMMITTEE: 5-2, 6/24/25
AYES: Limón, Allen, Hurtado, Laird, Stern
NOES: Seyarto, Grove

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 51-17, 5/27/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Gill nets: permits

SOURCE: Oceana
Resource Renewal Institute

DIGEST: This bill authorizes, on or after January 1, 2027, a set gill net permit holder to transfer a permit only to a family member once, and prohibit any further transfer of that permit, as provided.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

1) Establishes the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) in the California Natural Resources Agency.

   a) In general, the Commission sets regulations that CDFW implements and enforces. CDFW also provides data and expertise to inform the Commission's decision-making process.

2) Provides that fish and wildlife resources are held in trust for the people of California by and through CDFW (Fish and Game Code (FGC) §711.7).

3) Prohibits the use of gill and trammel nets for commercial purposes unless under a revocable, nontransferable permit issued by CDFW (FGC §8681).

4) Prevents CDFW from issuing a new gill and trammel net permit, but allows CDFW to renew an existing, valid gill and trammel net permit under regulations established by the Commission and upon payment of a fee (FGC §8681.5(a)).

5) Allows any gill and trammel net permit holder with an existing, valid gill and trammel net permit to transfer that permit to another qualified individual if that permit holder has taken or landed fish for commercial purposes in at least 15 of the preceding 20 years (FGC §8681.5(b)).

6) Allows for the transfer of a gill and trammel net permit to another qualified individual upon the disability or death of the original gill and trammel net permit holder (FGC §8681.5(d) and (e)).

7) Allows a person who was denied renewal of a gill and trammel net permit to appeal to the Commission under certain circumstances (FGC §8681.7).

8) Requires the Commission to establish regulations to create an orderly gill and trammel net fishery and consider recommendations for the gill and trammel net advisory committee (FGC §8682).

9) Limits the use of gill and trammel nets and limits allowable catch (FGC §§8684 –8700; 8610.4).

This bill:

1) Continues to authorize until January 1, 2027 any person who has an existing valid gill net or trammel net permit and presents satisfactory evidence to CDFW that the person has taken and landed fish for commercial purposes in at least 15 of the preceding 20 years to transfer that permit to any person otherwise qualified to possess it upon payment of the appropriate fee, as specified.

2) On or after January 1, 2027, authorizes any person who has an existing valid gill net or trammel net permit and presents satisfactory evidence to CDFW that the person has taken and landed fish for commercial purposes in at least 15 of the preceding 20 years to transfer that permit one time to a family member upon payment of the appropriate fee, as specified. Requires the permit become nontransferable thereafter.

3) Deletes the existing provision that authorized a previously active participant to transfer their permit in the event of a disability that precludes their ability to earn a livelihood from commercial fishing, as specified.

[NOTE: See the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee analysis for additional information about this bill.]

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/25/25)

Oceana (co-sponsor)
Resource Renewal Institute (co-sponsor)
American Fishing Tackle Company
Animal Welfare Institute
Animal Wellness Action/Center for a Humane Economy
Azul
Bay Area Youth Climate Summit
California Coastal Protection Network
California Marine Sanctuary Foundation
Center for the Blue Economy
CleanEarth4Kids.org
Coastal Conservation Association of California
Defenders of Wildlife
Dolphin Project
Earth Island Institute
Eco Dive Center
Emerald Keepers
Endangered Habitats League
Environment California
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin
Environmental Law Society, University of California, Irvine School of Law
Environmental Protection Information Center
Fish On
Heal the Bay
Healthy Ocean Coalition
Hollywood Divers
International Game Fish Association
Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust
Monterey Bay Whale Watch
Natural Resources Defense Council

Ocean Defenders Alliance
Pacific Beach Coalition
Project Super Plants
Reef Seekers Dive Company
Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area
Shark Allies
Sierra Club California
SlipIns
Solutions for a Sustainable & Just Future
The Honorable Eric Sklar, Commissioner, California Fish and Game Commission
The Nueva School Environmental Club
The SeaChange Agency
The Sportfishing Conservancy
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Western Watersheds Project

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/25/25)

Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries
Bodega Bay Fishermen's Marketing Association
Commercial Fishermen of Santa Barbara
Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization
Half Moon Bay Seafood Marketing Association
Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations
Port of San Luis Commercial Fishermen's Association
San Diego Fishermen's Working Group
San Francisco Crab Boat Owners' Association
Santa Cruz Commercial Fishermen's Association
Ventura County Commercial Fishermen's Association

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the author, "AB 1056 is common-sense, gradual reform – it blends fairness with conservation, aligning with established best practices in California fisheries management focused on long-term sustainability of California's marine resources and wildlife. Allowing a one-time family transfer recognizes the importance of family-run fishing businesses and gives permit holders a final opportunity to pass on their livelihood."

In a joint sign-on letter in support, the sponsors, Oceana and the Resource Renewal Institute, and others write, "Set gillnets are mile-long nets weighted to the seafloor for up to two days at a time, mainly used to catch white seabass and California halibut. However, the nets also entangle over 125 marine species in California

waters, including giant seabass, large whales, sharks, rays, skates, sea lions, seabirds, and other marine life – known as bycatch. While the active gillnet fleet is relatively small, the gear-type has outsized impacts on ecosystems and wildlife. Past citizen-and-scientist-led initiatives banned set gillnet fishing off central California and in nearshore waters off southern California, resulting in major rebounds of vulnerable fish, sharks, and marine mammals in these regions."

"Participation in the set gillnet fishery has declined over time, and now, the majority of existing permits are no longer being actively fished."

"As permit holders retire, the fishery will naturally contract, minimizing fishing effort over the long-term, and support the transition to more sustainable fishing methods. This is not an abrupt change. It's a measured policy that aligns with established fisheries management practices in California and reflects a long-term commitment to sustainable ocean stewardship."

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: Writing in opposition, the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations states, "When regulations limit access to California's well-managed fisheries without sufficient scientific support or consideration of economic impact, more and more commercial fishing businesses are driven out of the industry. The result is declining seafood production here at home and greater reliance on imports that may not meet the same quality, environmental, or labor standards as those required of domestic fisheries. This is unacceptable. It is difficult to reconcile claims of environmental protection with policies that result in seafood traveling thousands of miles instead of being harvested locally and sustainably. We should be working together to reduce the carbon footprint of our food system and strengthen local food production."

"AB1056 is yet another example of legislation attempting to override established fisheries management processes in response to certain groups' dissatisfaction with the outcome of the California Fish and Game Commission (FGC) process. At its August 2024 meeting, the FGC adopted regulation changes in the California Halibut and White Sea Bass Set Gill Net Fishery following a two-year comprehensive public process. Rather than accept the outcome of the fisheries management process, this bill seeks to regulate businesses and individuals rather than managing marine resources. Fisheries management must rely on established regulatory channels, not legislation that bypasses public review and stakeholder participation. We strongly oppose the passage of AB1056."

They and other opponents also argue that the decline in permits since the fishery became a limited entry fishery in 1990 already has limited growth, when to use a

fishing permit should be the holder's decision, and legislative efforts to "reduce permit holders and restrict access without scientific support are unjustified."

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 51-17, 5/27/25
AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Connolly, Elhawary, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Ortega, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Rogers, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Stefani, Ward, Wicks, Zbur, Rivas
NOES: Alanis, Castillo, Chen, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Ellis, Gallagher, Hadwick, Hoover, Lackey, Macedo, Patterson, Sanchez, Ta, Tangipa, Wallis
NO VOTE RECORDED: Flora, Jeff Gonzalez, Krell, Nguyen, Pacheco, Quirk-Silva, Michelle Rodriguez, Blanca Rubio, Soria, Valencia, Wilson

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8/26/25 16:22:45

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