

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 2207 (Hadwick)

As Amended August 17, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to establish a hunting tag transfer program for transfers to specified family members.

Senate Amendments

Delete the hunting tag transfer program for nonprofit organizations, require the collection of a fee for each transfer, sunset the program on January 1, 2033, and make minor and conforming changes.

COMMENTS

CDFW issues tags for five big game mammals (pronghorn antelope, elk, deer, bear, and bighorn sheep); a tag is required, in addition to a hunting license, to hunt these species. As the number of interested hunters far exceeds the quota numbers for some of these species, drawings are held using a modified-preference point system for premium deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, and bighorn sheep hunts. In 2024, one drawing for a bighorn sheep hunt drew 1,913 applicants for a single quota spot, and many hunts across species drew hundreds of applicants for single-digit quota spots. Additionally, hunters are limited to a single tag per year for bear, elk, and pronghorn antelope, two tags per year for deer, and a single tag per lifetime for bighorn sheep.

As a result of the drawing process, obtaining a big game tag in California can be very challenging. Under the modified-preference point system, applicants who enter a drawing but are unsuccessful accumulate a "preference point," which improves that applicant's odds in subsequent years (for each hunt, a portion of tags are drawn randomly from all applicants, and a portion are drawn only from the pool of applicants with the most preference points). When an applicant is drawn for a tag, they lose all accumulated preference points for that species.

Young people in particular face long odds, as they will have far fewer preference points than hunters who have been entering drawings for decades. In 2025, many hunts had more maximum point applicants (hunters with 23 years of unsuccessful drawings) than quota spots, meaning that anyone with 22 or fewer points could only hope to win the very small number of random tags. For these young hunters, there is limited prospect of improvement to their poor odds for many years (i.e., someone with three points currently will likely be 20 points behind the maximum point total for many more years). As a result, tags are precious, and very few elk, pronghorn antelope, and bighorn sheep tag winners do not attempt to hunt.

Occasionally, however, life does get in the way. Whether a personal conflict or health concern prevents hunting (bighorn sheep hunts, for instance, occur mostly in extremely rugged terrain above 10,000 feet in elevation), sometimes hunters are unable to use the tags they have been awarded. Under existing law, if a hunter is unable to hunt for any reason, they may, before the season begins, return their tag to CDFW for a refund and reinstatement of preference points. Tag return to CDFW is the only lawful option currently available to hunters who are unable to use their tags (other than simply not utilizing the tag), as transfer of the tag to any other person is

prohibited. This bill creates a program for the transfer of hunting tags to a hunter's child or grandchild 17 years of age or younger.

According to the Author

"[This bill] focuses on improving access to hunting opportunities for families . . . This bill is about making sure the traditions of hunting do not fade away, especially for the next generation. If an adult in the family draws a tag but can't use it, [this bill] would allow them to pass that opportunity down to a young hunter in the same hunt—so that the chance to learn and participate does not go to waste. This bill would make it easier for young hunters to get out in the field with their dad or grandpa—learning the skills, the respect for the land, and the stories that come with it. This bill helps keep California's hunting heritage alive."

Arguments in Support

Safari Club International California Coalition, writing in support, states: "This legislation establishes a critical hunting tag transfer program that directly benefits California's youth . . . ensuring our state's rich hunting heritage is passed down to the next generation."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, this bill has the following fiscal impact:

- 1) One-time costs below \$150,000 (General Fund) for [CDFW] to develop and implement a hunting tag transfer program that authorizes a person to transfer a tag issued for the take of specified species to their child or grandchild, subject to specified conditions.
- 2) Potential increased fee revenues of an unknown amount not to exceed CDFW costs for administration (Big Game Management Account).

VOTES:**ASM WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE: 13-0-0**

YES: Papan, Jeff Gonzalez, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Fariás, Bains, Bennett, Boerner, Caloza, Gallagher, Hart, Muratsuchi, Rogers

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0-3

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula, Flora, Celeste Rodriguez

UPDATED

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