

## **Senate Bill 30**

### **Establishing a Sustainable Future for Fishing and Boating in Pennsylvania**

- Senate Bill 30 authorizes the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) to establish fees charged to anglers and boaters, namely fishing licenses and permits and boat registrations and titles.
- As an independent administrative agency that is not supported by General Fund revenues and relies on user fees to pay for almost everything it does, the PFBC has a vested business interest in setting a fee structure that generates sufficient revenues to sustain its work on behalf of anglers, boaters, and aquatic resources while having the least possible negative impact on participation and sales.
- The current system of establishing the PFBC's fees by legislation results in large fee increases after long periods of time that drive angler participation down due to the size of the increases necessary to offset rising costs.
- Under SB 30, fees would be established by regulation, offer the opportunity for public comment, and be considered by the Board of Commissioners at two separate public meetings. The General Assembly may disapprove any fee change by concurrent resolution.
- The PFBC would use a deliberate, business approach to setting fees that accounts for inflation since the last license increase in 2005; anticipates changing demographics; recognizes sales data patterns; and anticipates modest, incremental increases to keep up with rising costs – all while attempting to minimize the long-term impacts to customers.
- In addition to the transparent process that includes public comment, existing checks and balances offer opportunities for monitoring the PFBC's responsible implementation of this authority.
  - The PFBC is required to submit an annual report to the House and Senate Game and Fisheries and Appropriations Committees.
  - The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) conducts a performance audit of the PFBC every three years.
  - Members of the Board of Commissioners are subject to Senate confirmation.
- SB 30 includes a three-year sunset provision, allowing the General Assembly to evaluate this new approach before extending the authority to the PFBC for additional years.
- The PFBC would still be able to offer the popular multi-year fishing licenses and permits that are convenient, cost-effective alternatives for avid anglers.
- The PFBC has consistently demonstrated a commitment to fiscal discipline and was recognized by the LBFC for having the lowest expenditures per license among states surveyed nationwide.
- The PFBC has enlisted Penn State's Smeal College of Business to advise it on a business plan for the agency that can be used to help inform marketing approaches, license package options, and the agency's next strategic plan.
- SB 30 also authorizes the PFBC to change other outdated fees, broadens the use of proceeds from the Lake Erie permit for projects that benefit public fishing, removes the word "salmon" from the trout/salmon permit since the agency no longer stocks salmon, and makes minor technical amendments to ensure consistency throughout Title 30.