

HOUSE BILL NO. 564

INTRODUCED BY M. MARLER

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING HUNTERS TO REPORT HUNTING ACTIVITY FOR DEER AND ELK TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PARKS; PROVIDING ~~INCENTIVES FOR REPORTING AND~~ PENALTIES FOR NONREPORTING; ESTABLISHING DEADLINES; REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT TO DEVELOP A SYSTEM TO COLLECT REPORTING INFORMATION; PROVIDING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; DEFINING "HUNTING ACTIVITY"; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, phone survey efficacy has decreased due to the increased use of mobile phones and reduced participation from individuals; and

WHEREAS, information regarding the total number of elk and deer harvested in a license year is crucial information for biologists, hunters, and the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks to make the management decisions; and

WHEREAS, electronic reporting may increase hunter participation and increase the amount of information available to interested parties.

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

NEW SECTION. **Section 1. ~~Mandatory reporting~~ Reporting of deer and elk hunting activity --**

~~bonus point -- administrative fee --~~ rulemaking. (1) A person who holds a hunting license for deer or elk shall report to the department their hunting activity for each animal during the license year.

~~(2) — A person who completes reporting of their hunting activity by February 15 of the license year in which the person purchased a deer or elk license may choose to receive one bonus point for either a deer or elk upon completion and submission of the report.~~

~~(3)~~(2) A person who does not complete reporting of their hunting activity prior to ~~the end March 15~~ of ~~the year following~~ the license year in which the person purchased a deer or elk license will be assessed an

1 administrative fee of no less than \$5 and no more than ~~\$50~~ \$25, subject to determination by the department.

2 The fee must be paid prior to the purchase of or upon purchasing a base hunting license for the coming license
3 year. A hunter may not be required to pay more than one administrative fee for all reporting violations during a
4 license year.

5 ~~(4)~~(3) The validation of an electronic tag pursuant to 87-2-119 does not satisfy the reporting
6 requirements of this section.

7 ~~(5)~~(4) The department shall:

8 (a) develop a system for collecting and retaining mandatory hunting activity reports; ~~The~~
9 ~~department shall provide physical reporting forms, if applicable for carrying out the provisions of this section.~~

10 (b) make reporting forms available online and physically; and

11 (c) notify hunters that the report is available electronically, if applicable.

12 ~~(6)~~(5) The department may make rules to implement this section.

13 ~~(7)~~(6) As used in this section, "hunting activity" includes harvest success, hunting district locations,
14 dates during which hunting occurred, and any other pertinent hunting information as determined by the
15 department.

16
17 NEW SECTION. Section 2. Codification instruction. [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an
18 integral part of Title 87, chapter 2, part 1, and the provisions of Title 87, chapter 2, part 1, apply to [section 1].

19
20 NEW SECTION. Section 3. Effective date. [This act] is effective March 1, 2026.

21 - END -