
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7051

AN ACT CONCERNING THE BLACK BEAR POPULATION IN THE STATE.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner to create, and change as needed, a black bear management plan. He must do so in conjunction with the emergency services and public protection commissioner. The plan is intended to help ensure public safety, protect property, and sustain the state's black bear population. The plan must include:

1. an assessment of this bear population, including what the future population should be across the state;
2. recommended ways to reduce conflicts with humans;
3. guidelines for public education initiatives that address black bear management and human-bear conflict avoidance;
4. plans for how to respond to these bears and deter them with nonlethal methods;
5. an evaluation of potential black bear population control methods;
6. plans and procedures for the public and state and local entities to manage black bears that pose an imminent threat to public safety or property;
7. recommended trash management practices to reduce attracting bears; and
8. strategies to coordinate with towns, law enforcement, and other interested parties to improve safety measures.

DEEP must submit the plan to the Public Safety and Security and Environment committees by July 1, 2026, and if changed, 30 days or less from when the change is completed.

The bill also specifically allows the DEEP commissioner, if he determines that this bear population poses a public safety threat, to ask the governor to issue an executive order permitting any appropriate black bear population control measures.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 25 Nay 3 (03/18/2025)