



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 72

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 146

Senate, March 19, 2026

The Committee on Environment reported through SEN. LOPES of the 6th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF CROPS AND LIVESTOCK FROM CERTAIN WILDLIFE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (e) of section 26-47 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
3 *passage*):

4 (e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section,
5 the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection may issue
6 permits for the taking of wildlife that threatens or causes damage to
7 agricultural crops, livestock or apiaries, or that caused damage to crops
8 during the preceding growing season, as verified by the Department of
9 Energy and Environmental Protection if: (1) The owner or lessee of the
10 subject property utilized reasonable nonlethal efforts to protect such
11 [crops,] apiaries or livestock, including, but not limited to, electric
12 fencing, animal guardians or fortified enclosed structures, and (2) an
13 investigation by Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
14 personnel determines that the taking of such wildlife is necessary to

15 protect agricultural crops, apiaries or livestock from excessive damage
 16 and that reasonable nonlethal efforts to protect such [crops,] apiaries or
 17 livestock have not been or are not likely to be successful in preventing
 18 further damage. Any such permit issued pursuant to this subsection
 19 shall specify the means, methods and times for which such take is
 20 allowed and shall only be issued by the commissioner to the: (A) Owner
 21 of the subject property on which such excessive damage occurred, (B)
 22 agent of such owner, or (C) lessee of such subject property, provided
 23 such lessee has the written permission of such owner to take wildlife.
 24 No application for a permit pursuant to this section shall require
 25 notarization. Any wildlife taken pursuant to this section shall be
 26 disposed of as directed by the department. The provisions of this
 27 subsection shall not be construed to authorize the taking of any federally
 28 protected species.

29 Sec. 2. Subsection (c) of section 26-80a of the general statutes is
 30 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
 31 *passage*):

32 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent any person
 33 from using deadly physical force to kill a bear if such person reasonably
 34 believes that a bear is: (1) Inflicting or is about to inflict great bodily
 35 harm to a human, (2) injuring or killing such person's pet or livestock
 36 that is otherwise controlled in accordance with any applicable provision
 37 of the general statutes or any regulation adopted pursuant to such a
 38 provision, or (3) entering a building occupied by persons.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	26-47(e)
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	26-80a(c)

ENV Joint Favorable Subst.

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	GF - Cost	32,500	32,500
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	13,231	13,231
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Revenue Gain	Minimal	Minimal
Judicial Dept. (Probation)	GF - Potential Savings	Minimal	Minimal
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Potential Revenue Loss	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill expands and revises the use of deadly physical force to kill a bear. The bill results in a cost to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) associated with monitoring crop damage, issuing additional permits, and disposing of wildlife. DEEP will require a part-time Environmental Conservation Officer, with a salary of \$32,500 and corresponding fringe benefits of \$13,231 (for a total of \$45,721) annually, beginning in FY 27. Also, there is a minimal revenue increase to the resources of the General Fund associated with issuing additional permits. It is anticipated the revenue increase will be minimal.

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.82% of payroll in FY 27.

The bill also expands the circumstances in which a person may exert lethal force over wildlife resulting in a potential savings to the Judicial Department for probation and a potential revenue loss to the General Fund from fines.² On average, the marginal cost for supervision in the community is less than \$600³ each year for adults and \$450 each year for juveniles.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation, number of permits, and actual violations.

² From FY 20 - FY 25, 14 charges were recorded and \$250 in associated revenue was collected under CGS § 26-80a.

³ Probation marginal cost is based on services provided by private providers and only includes costs that increase with each additional participant.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 146*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF CROPS AND LIVESTOCK FROM CERTAIN WILDLIFE.*****SUMMARY**

This bill allows a person to use deadly physical force to kill a bear if they reasonably believe the bear is injuring or killing their controlled livestock. The law already allows people to kill bears when they reasonably believe the bear is (1) inflicting, or about to inflict, great bodily harm to a person; (2) injuring or killing their controlled pet; or (3) entering an occupied building.

The bill also revises the conditions under which the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner may issue a permit to take (e.g., kill or trap) certain nuisance wildlife that threatens or damages agricultural crops. Under current law, to get a permit, the property owner or lessee must have tried reasonable nonlethal efforts (e.g., electric fencing, animal guardians, or fortified structures) that failed to prevent damage. The bill removes the requirement that the owner or lessee try reasonable nonlethal efforts to protect crops. The bill also allows DEEP to issue permits for the taking of nuisance wildlife if the wildlife caused damage to agricultural crops during the previous growing season, as verified by DEEP. As under existing law, DEEP must specify in the permit the means, methods, and times for taking the nuisance wildlife, and the permit cannot allow for the taking of deer or a federally protected species.

By law, anyone who violates the conditions of a permit is guilty of a class D misdemeanor (up to 30 days in prison, up to a \$250 fine, or both). The DEEP commissioner must also revoke the permit, as well as all other permits or licenses relating to the property. The permit is suspended for a period of time set by the commissioner.

Lastly, the bill prohibits DEEP's nuisance wildlife permit applications from requiring notarization.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 25 Nay 8 (03/04/2026)