House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 400

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 7051

House of Representatives, April 1, 2025

The Committee on Public Safety and Security reported through REP. BOYD of the 50th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE BLACK BEAR POPULATION IN THE STATE.

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

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection, in conjunction with the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, shall develop, and thereafter revise as necessary, a black bear management plan to ensure public safety and the protection of property and maintain a sustainable black bear population in the state. Such plan shall include, but need not be limited to: (1) An assessment of the current black bear population, and the desired future status of such population, in various regions of the state, (2) recommendations for minimizing human and black bear conflicts, (3) guidelines for public education initiatives concerning management and conflict avoidance, (4) strategies for nonlethal black bear deterrence and response, (5) an evaluation of potential black bear population control measures, (6) protocols for the public, the state and agencies, instrumentalities and political

subdivisions of the state to manage black bears that pose an imminent threat to public safety or property, (7) recommendations for waste management practices to reduce black bear attractants, and (8) strategies for coordinating with municipalities, law enforcement officers and interested parties to improve black bear safety measures.

(b) Not later than July 1, 2026, the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall submit the plan, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public safety and the environment. If such plan is revised, the commissioner shall submit such revised plan to said committees not later than thirty days after the development of such revised plan.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) If the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection determines that the black bear population in the state poses a threat to public safety, the commissioner may request the Governor to issue an executive order to authorize any appropriate black bear population control measures.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	*from passage*	New section
Sec. 2	*from passage*	New section

PS *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: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to create a black bear management plan. This is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact as DEEP has the staff and expertise necessary to develop the plan.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

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)