

One Hundred Second Legislature - First Session - 2011

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB392

Chairperson: Senator Chris Langemeier

Committee: Natural Resources

Date of Hearing: February 17, 2011

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 392 would provide powers and duties to Nebraska Game and Parks Commission relating to aquatic invasive species. Nebraskan's rely on limited water resources for a number of activities. This resource is being impacted and further threatened by aquatic invasive species such as Phragmites, Asian Carp, and Zebra Mussels.

Currently, Nebraska has no regulatory authority over aquatic invasive species like Zebra Mussels. LB 392 would prohibit the possession, importation and exportation of aquatic invasive species and allows Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to establish rules and regulations to better manage against the impacts of such species. It also creates a new funding mechanism to develop an aquatic invasive species program focused on the prevention of new introductions and species eradication when feasible. The funding would come from a new \$30 user fee imposed on non-resident boaters and a 20% increase in resident boater registration. For most Nebraska boaters, this would equal an increase of around \$6-\$9 for a three year registration. The threat of infestation by aquatic invasive species is high for many water-bodies in Nebraska; an aquatic invasive species program could help ameliorate the associated costs. This legislation follows recommended actions in the new state-wide Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan, which was approved by Governor Heineman and the National Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force last fall.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Ken Schilz