MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION 2021

By: Representative Morgan

To: Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

HOUSE BILL NO. 423

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-26, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS TO CREATE A HARVEST REPORTING PROGRAM FOR WHITE-TAILED DEER AND WILD TURKEY; TO PROVIDE THAT THE PROGRAM SHALL BE A PHYSICAL TAGGING PROGRAM THAT IS SIMPLE TO USE BY SPORTSMEN SO AS TO PROMOTE COMPLIANCE AND ACCURATE REPORTING; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 49-7-26, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

49-7-26. (1) (a) The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks *** * *** shall develop, implement and regulate a *** * *** mandatory harvest reporting program for white-tailed deer and wild turkey or both. The purpose of this program is to collect and compile harvest data *** * *** of such quality and quantity as to be able to assist the Legislature and the commission in formulating the wildlife resource conservation policy for the State of Mississippi.

(b) *** * *** The harvest reporting program shall be a physical tagging program that is simple to use by sportsmen so as to promote compliance and accurate reporting.

(c) The department shall provide an annual report for the harvest reporting program to the Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

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(*** * ***2) A person who violates any law or regulation *** * *** implementing and/or regulating the harvest reporting program is guilty of a Class *** * *** II violation and shall be subject to the fines provided in *** * *** Section 49-7-143. In addition, a person shall be assessed the administrative fee prescribed in this section.

(*** * ***3) (a) A person convicted of a first violation of the *** * *** harvest reporting program shall be assessed an administrative fee of not less than One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) nor more than Five Hundred Dollars ($500.00), which shall be imposed and collected upon conviction. A person convicted of a second or subsequent violation shall be assessed an administrative fee of not less than Five Hundred Dollars ($500.00) nor more than One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00), which shall be imposed and collected upon conviction.

(b) The clerk of the court shall collect and deposit the administrative fees with the State Treasurer, in the same manner and in accordance with the same procedure, as nearly as practicable, as required for the collection and deposit of state assessments under Section 99-19-73.

(c) The administrative fees shall be credited to the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and may be expended by the department upon appropriation by the Legislature.

(* * *4) Each deer or turkey taken or possessed in violation of the * * * harvest reporting program is a separate offense.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2021.

~ OFFICIAL ~

ST: Harvest reporting program; require the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks to create for white-tailed deer and wild turkey.