



SOUTH CAROLINA LIMITS NUMBER OF TURTLES HARVESTED IN THE STATE

**** COMMITTEE HEARING ON FEBRUARY 18TH ****

The Issue.

South Carolina House Bill 3121 prohibits removing more than ten turtles of certain species from the State. Any person who removes or attempts to remove more than ten of the named species will be guilty of a misdemeanor. The taxonomic name of Yellowbelly turtles should be *Trachemys scripta scripta* to avoid problems involving Red eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta elegans*).

The Impact.

This bill makes it unlawful for a person to remove, or attempt to remove, more than ten, either in one species or a combination of species, of the following species of turtles:

- Yellowbelly turtle (*Trachemys scripta*);
- Florida cooter (*Pseudemys floridana*);
- River cooter (*Pseudemys concinna*);
- Chicken turtle (*Deirochelys reticularia*);
- Eastern painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta*);
- Spiny softshell turtle (*Apalone spinifera*);
- Florida softshell turtle (*Apalone ferox*); and
- Common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*).

Violation of these provisions is a misdemeanor and, if convicted, a person must pay a \$200 fine, with each turtle removed or attempted to be removed being a separate offense.

NOTE: This legislation “does not prohibit the sale, offer for sale, or purchase of the Yellowbelly turtle (*Trachemys scripta*) species and the common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) species if these turtles were taken from a permitted aquaculture facility. However, a person selling, offering to sell, or purchasing these species must have documentation from the aquaculture facility as to the origin of the turtles.”



Recommended Action.

Limiting the number of these turtle species from in-state harvest could be detrimental to your business, therefore, we wanted to make you aware of this legislation so you can take action if warranted. HB 3121 is set to be heard before the House Committee on Agriculture, Natural Resources & Environmental Affairs on February 18, 2009, in Room 410 at 2:30 p.m. Contact members of the committee (listed below, with districts they represent, and contact information) immediately to voice your concerns. Those interested in reviewing the actual bill will find it attached to the online version of this PetAlert on the Breaking News page of PIJAC's website (www.pijac.org). PIJAC will also be posting any updates in status to this bill on its website, so **you should check back regularly for changes and recommendations for additional action.**

If you have any questions concerning this bill please contact PIJAC's Bambi Nicole Osborne by phone at 202-452-1525 or by email at bambi@pijac.org.

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& Environmental Affairs
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