

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 863

BY REPRESENTATIVE VENTRELLA

WILDLIFE & FISHERIES: Requires a search warrant before wildlife enforcement agents can conduct inspections

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 56:55, relative to wildlife enforcement agents; to prohibit
3 wildlife enforcement agents from conducting searches or inspections without first
4 obtaining a search warrant; and to provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 56:55 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

7 §55. Search with or without warrant

8 A. The secretary, the deputy secretary, or any commissioned wildlife
9 enforcement agent of the enforcement division may visit, inspect, and examine, with
10 or without a search warrant, records, any cold storage plant, warehouse, boat, store,
11 car, conveyance, automobile or other vehicle, airplane or other aircraft, basket or
12 other receptacle, or any place of deposit for wild birds, wild quadrupeds, fish, or
13 other aquatic life or any parts thereof whenever there is probable cause to believe
14 that a violation has occurred.

15 B. Commissioned wildlife enforcement agents of the enforcement division
16 are authorized to visit or inspect at frequent intervals ~~without the need of search~~
17 ~~warrants~~, records, cold storage plants, bait stands, warehouses, public restaurants,
18 public and private markets, stores, and places where wild birds, game quadrupeds,
19 fish, or other aquatic life or any parts thereof may be kept and offered for sale, for
20 the purpose of ascertaining whether any laws or regulations under the jurisdiction of
21 the department have been violated. They also shall inspect establishments for

1 commercial licenses required by the department to retail and/or wholesale
 2 commercial fish and bait fish where applicable under the provisions of this Chapter.
 3 The department may institute proceedings in any court of competent jurisdiction for
 4 violation of laws or regulations under its jurisdiction.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 863 Original

2026 Regular Session

Ventrella

Abstract: Prohibits wildlife enforcement agents from conducting inspections without first obtaining a search warrant.

Present law allows any commissioned wildlife enforcement agent of the enforcement division to visit, inspect, and examine, with or without search warrant, records, any cold storage plant, warehouse, boat, store, car, conveyance, automobile or other vehicle, airplane or other aircraft, basket or other receptacle, or any place of deposit for wild birds, wild quadrupeds, fish, or other aquatic life or any parts thereof whenever there is probable cause to believe that a violation has occurred.

Proposed law removes the provision of present law that allows for inspections or examinations to be performed without a search warrant.

Present law authorizes commissioned wildlife enforcement agents of the enforcement division to visit or inspect at frequent intervals without the need of search warrants to determine whether any laws or regulations under the jurisdiction of the dept. have been violated and to bring a case in any court of competent jurisdiction.

Proposed law removes the provision of present law that allows commissioned wildlife agents of the enforcement division to visit or inspect without the need of a search warrant.

(Amends R.S. 56:55)