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**AB-655 Fish and wildlife: aquatic invasive species: Caulerpa.** (2023-2024)

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**Assembly Bill No. 655**

**CHAPTER 119**

An act to amend Section 2300 of the Fish and Game Code, relating to algae.

[ Approved by Governor July 27, 2023. Filed with Secretary of State July 27, 2023. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 655, Petrie-Norris. Fish and wildlife: aquatic invasive species: Caulerpa.

Existing law prohibits a person from selling, possessing, importing, transporting, transferring, releasing alive in the state, or giving away without consideration the salt water algae of enumerated Caulerpa species, except possession for bona fide scientific research, as provided. Existing law subjects any person who violates these provisions to a specified civil penalty and to specified infraction or misdemeanor penalties.

This bill would instead prohibit a person from selling, possessing, importing, transporting, transferring, releasing alive in the state, or giving away without consideration all salt water algae of the genus Caulerpa, except that possession for bona fide scientific research.

Because this bill expands the scope of conduct subject to criminal penalties, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** Section 2300 of the Fish and Game Code is amended to read:

**2300.** (a) No person shall sell, possess, import, transport, transfer, release alive in the state, or give away without consideration the salt water algae of the genus Caulerpa.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), a person may possess, for bona fide scientific research, as determined by the department, upon authorization by the department, the salt water algae of the genus Caulerpa.

(c) In addition to any other penalty provided by law, any person who violates this section is subject to a civil penalty of not less than five hundred dollars (\$500) and not more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for each violation.

**SEC. 2.** No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.