

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5734

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS, MARCH 1, 1993

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to fees for water access facilities.

SPONSORS: Senators Haugen, Fraser, Hargrove, Owen and Oke

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chairman; McCaslin, Moore, and Sutherland.

Staff: Cathy Baker (786-7708)

Hearing Dates: February 26, 1993; March 1, 1993

BACKGROUND:

Under current law, the State Parks and Recreation Commission may charge fees for services, utilities, and use of facilities as the commission deems proper. Over the years, the commission has adopted various user fees for camping, moorage of boats, and other uses of state park facilities.

In preparation for anticipated budget reductions during the 1993-95 biennium, the commission recently adopted a fee package that would increase existing fees and establish new fees. Among the new fees are boat launching fees, trailer dump fees, seasonal day area parking fees, and a surcharge at popular destination parks. Although the new fees have been adopted by the commission, implementation of the fees will likely be delayed until the state's 1993-95 operating budget is adopted. The fee structure may be modified according to the level of the agency's appropriation.

SUMMARY:

The State Parks and Recreation Commission shall consider levels of service in setting fees for use of water access facilities. Fees shall be based on the extent to which a facility is developed and maintained for year-round use. Maximum boat launch fees shall be assessed only at water access facilities where bathrooms, parking areas, and docking facilities are provided and maintained on a regular basis. Reduced fees may be assessed at water access facilities that are unimproved. These provisions do not preclude the assessment of a flat annual fee for use of all water access facilities and other state park facilities.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

The boat launching fees recently adopted by the commission are high, and will present a hardship for some boaters, including many senior citizens. The fees should be based on the type of facility and the extent to which it is developed and maintained. The Legislature should provide some guidance to the commission in how they adopt fees.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator Mary Margaret Haugen (prime sponsor)