

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1615

As Reported By House Committee On:

Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to offenses committed in state parks or parkways.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to offenses committed in state parks or parkways.

Sponsors: Representatives Alexander, Regala and Sump; by request of Parks and Recreation Commission.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 2/25/97, 3/5/97 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander; Anderson; Chandler; Hatfield; Pennington and Sheldon.

Staff: Rick Anderson (786-7114).

Background: It is unlawful to cut, break, injure, destroy, or take vegetation or natural objects within a state park. The Parks and Recreation Commission does not have authority to prescribe rules to grant exemptions to this law. Berry-picking, environmental education classes, and scientific studies are examples of activities that often violate this law.

Summary of Bill: The commission is authorized to adopt rules allowing exemptions to the law prohibiting a cut, break, or take of vegetation or natural objects in state parks.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The commission has adopted policies allowing common sense exemptions but the commission is not technically authorized to grant such exemptions. The bill provides this needed authority.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Gary Alexander, prime sponsor; and Rex Derr, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (in favor).