

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5010

As Reported by House Committee On:
Ecology & Parks

Title: An act relating to creating a state park foster home pass.

Brief Description: Creating a state park foster home pass.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Honeyford and Hewitt).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Ecology & Parks: 2/22/08, 2/26/08 [DP].

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Creates a state park foster home pass that entitles the holder and the members of his or her camping unit to free admission and camping at state parks, as well as free access and usage of park campsites at some non-operated, non-state-owned parks.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Upthegrove, Chair; Rolfes, Vice Chair; Sump, Ranking Minority Member; Dickerson, Dunshee, Eickmeyer, Kristiansen, O'Brien and Pearson.

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

Background:

Washington statute provides state park fee discounts and exemptions to several categories of residents. These classes include: (1) senior citizens with a limited income; (2) disabled persons; and (3) disabled veterans. Generally, the exemptions provide free park admission and a 50 percent reduction in camping fees. The disabled veteran exemption, however, provides free park admission, an exemption from camping reservation fees, and free camping.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

Washington residents qualify for a foster home pass when they either provide licensed foster care to a child under a foster family home license or are related to that child. When accompanied by a foster child, the pass entitles the holder and the members of his or her camping unit to free admission and camping at state parks.

Applicants must request a pass from the State Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission). The Commission must verify with the Department of Social and Health Services that the applicant is eligible for a pass. The Commission must issue passes for no less than one year.

The Commission must also negotiate to allow holders of the foster home park pass free access and use of park campsites at Central Ferry, Chief Timothy, Crow Butte, and Lyons Ferry in Asotin County. The Commission will request reimbursement on a biennial basis.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a way to say thank you to foster parents and their children.

(Opposed) This would be a fiscal impact to State Parks. This bill would be a double hit to the State Parks. First, camping would be free to these park holders and their camping units and so State Parks would have to change their software and do rule making to accommodate this new pass. Second, State Parks would have to negotiate with the Army Corps of Engineers for access to the non-state-owned parks. State Parks would like to see a stable source of revenue before implementing this program.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Honeyford, prime sponsor.

(Opposed) Fred Romero, Washington State Parks.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.