

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SHB 1677

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating the outdoor education and recreation grant program for schools and others.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Quall, Rodne, Dunshee, Ormsby, B. Sullivan, Hurst, Chase, Hunt, P. Sullivan, Pettigrew, Lovick, Jarrett, McCoy, Anderson, Upthegrove, Santos, Sells, Conway and Rolfes).

House Committee on Education

House Committee on Appropriations

Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

Public schools in Washington are required to provide instruction in a variety of subject areas, including science. Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) and Grade Level Expectations for science have been established, and beginning with the graduating class of 2010, students must pass the science content area of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning to graduate from high school. In addition, instruction is required at all grade levels about conservation, natural resources, and the environment.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) administers a Natural Science, Wildlife, and Environmental Education Partnership Account and Grant Program whose purpose is to promote proven and innovative natural science, wildlife, and environmental education programs that are fully aligned with the EALRs. In 2006, legislation was enacted requiring the OSPI to conduct an environmental education study in partnership with public and private entities that promote quality environmental education experiences. The study must be completed by October 1, 2007.

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission is responsible for the acquisition, operation, enhancement, and protection of recreational, cultural, historical, and natural sites. These sites include 120 developed parks, as well as recreation programs such as trails, boating safety, and winter recreation.

Summary:

The Outdoor Education and Recreation Program Account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer and may receive funds from any source, including gifts, grants, and donations. Subject to the availability of funds, the Outdoor Education and Recreation Grant Program (Program) is created within the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission). The Commission establishes and implements the Program by rule, with the

objective of involving public agencies, private nonprofit organizations, formal school programs, non-formal after school programs, and community-based programs in efforts to provide outdoor education and recreation programs for students.

Beginning with schools that are most in need in suburban, rural, and urban areas, the Program should focus on low-income students and those in danger of failing academically or dropping out of school. The Commission sets priorities and develops criteria for awarding grants to programs, considering certain specified characteristics of the applying programs, and considering state parks as venues and use of the Commission's personnel as a resource.

The Commission must create an advisory committee with representatives from various specified agencies, the business community, outdoor organizations with an interest in education, and others. The advisory committee assists and advises the Commission in the development and administration of the Program.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	0
Senate	49	0

Effective: July 22, 2007