

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1259

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation, March 28, 2007

Title: An act relating to park passes.

Brief Description: Allowing the parks and recreation commission to deny or revoke the issuance of a park pass in certain circumstances.

Sponsors: House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives B. Sullivan, Kretz, Blake and Moeller; by request of Parks and Recreation Commission).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/06/07, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation: 3/22/07, 3/28/07 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, OCEAN & RECREATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Jacobsen, Chair; Rockefeller, Vice Chair; Morton, Ranking Minority Member; Fraser, Hargrove, Poulsen, Spanel, Stevens and Swecker.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

Background: Current law 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.

The discount pass statute requires the holder of a senior citizen's pass to surrender the pass on request of a State Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) employee when the employee has reason to believe that the holder does not meet the applicable eligibility requirements. However, there is no specific language that addresses revoking or making void discount passes in other situations.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Commission may deny or revoke any discount park pass for cause. The term "for cause" includes, but is not limited to:

- residency outside of the state;
- violations of laws or rules resulting in eviction from a state park;
- intimidating, obstructing, or assaulting a park employee or volunteer;

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- fraudulent use of a discount pass;
- providing false information when applying for a discount pass;
- refusing to display a discount pass to a park employee upon request; or
- failing to provide current pass eligibility information upon request or when eligibility for a discount pass ceases or changes.

The Commission may participate with other outdoor recreation agencies in mutually agreed upon reciprocal or discounted pass programs.

The bill makes technical changes to the structure of the park pass statute.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY RECOMMENDED AMENDMENT(S) AS PASSED COMMITTEE (Natural Resources, Ocean & Recreation): While the underlying language did not address issues relating to scientific research, the committee amendment adds a provision authorizing the Commission to issue a research pass, permit, or other approval to those conducting scientific wildlife research.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill will help state park rangers deal with problems in state parks, and promote peace and quiet in park areas. It will also help the Commission address fraud, which can occur when passholders make free or discount reservations for themselves, and then allow their friends or family to use the campsite.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Fred Romero, State Parks and Recreation Commission.