

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5538

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning members of certain nonprofit conservation corps programs.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection (originally sponsored by Senator White).

**Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Consumer Protection**  
**House Committee on Labor & Workforce Development**

**Background:** The National and Community Service Trust Act (Act) was enacted in 1993 and established the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Act launched AmeriCorps, a network of programs that promote national service in education, public safety, health, and the environment. Language in the Act specifies living allowances and other benefits provided to participants, and the United States Department of Labor has determined that AmeriCorps participants are exempt from federal Davis-Bacon Act labor standards, which establish a prevailing wage for government public projects.

The Legislature created the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) in 1983 to provide work experience and skills to the youth of the state between the ages of 18 and 25. WCC projects support conservation, rehabilitation, and enhancement of the state's natural, historic, environmental, and recreational resources. WCC members are paid minimum wage.

The Washington Service Corps (WSC) was created by the Washington State Legislature in 1983 to give young adults opportunities to serve their communities. When the national AmeriCorps program began in 1994, the WSC became part of the national service movement and now all WSC members are also AmeriCorps members. The WSC works with nonprofit organizations and local governments to address a variety of community needs. The WSC is administered by the Washington State Employment Security Department with federal funding provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

**Summary:** Participants in a conservation corps program offered by a nonprofit organization are exempt from provisions related to rates of compensation while performing environmental and trail maintenance work. The nonprofit must be affiliated with a national service organization established under the National and Community Service Trust Act, registered with the Secretary of State, and have its management and administrative headquarters located in state.

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*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.*

Participants in the program must spend at least 15 percent of their time on education and training activities and receive a stipend or living allowance as authorized by federal or state law.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	48	0
House	91	1

**Effective:** July 22, 2011.