

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2710

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs

**Title:** An act relating to eligibility for lifetime veteran's disability passes.

**Brief Description:** Concerning eligibility for lifetime veteran's disability passes.

**Sponsors:** Representatives McCabe, Kilduff, Johnson, Kochmar, Caldier, Wylie, Walsh, Dent, Muri, Wilson and Shea.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs: 1/26/16, 1/28/16 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Extends free veteran's disability lifetime park passes to any disabled veteran, regardless of state residency.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Ryu, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair; Wilson, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Hickel and Sawyer.

**Staff:** David Rubenstein (786-7153).

**Background:**

Washington Park Passes.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) are charged with managing the public lands of the state. The WDFW owns or manages nearly one million acres of public land for fish and wildlife, habitat conservation, and wildlife-related

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recreation. The DNR protects and manages 5.6 million acres of state-owned land. State Parks oversees 119 developed parks.

A Discover Pass is generally required for vehicle access on designated recreational areas located on state lands owned or managed by the DNR, the WDFW, and State Parks. The cost is \$30 for an annual pass and \$10 for a day-use permit. The use of park facilities such as campsites sometimes carries an additional fee.

#### Free Park Passes.

State Parks must grant a variety of access passes to certain individuals at no charge. Among them are senior citizens passes available to persons over 62 years old, disability passes, foster home camping passes available to foster parents accompanied by foster children, and disabled veterans passes available to veterans with at least a 30 percent service-related disability. Each pass is available only to Washington residents meeting the eligibility requirements, and State Parks is authorized to deny or revoke a pass from a person not residing in Washington.

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#### **Summary of Bill:**

The lifetime veteran disability pass is available to any veteran meeting the 30 percent service-related disability requirement, regardless of where the veteran resides. State Parks may not deny or revoke a pass from a veteran based on residency outside of Washington.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

#### **Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Oregon provides free passes to non-resident veterans, but Oregon veterans are not afforded the same privilege in Washington. This bill will address that and help drive business to Washington State while providing a service to veterans who have served this country.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) The fiscal impact reflected in the fiscal note is much higher than what it will actually cost because lost Discover Pass revenue is counted twice.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative McCabe, prime sponsor.

(Other) Diana Dupree, Washington State Parks and Recreation.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.