
**Community Development, Housing &
Tribal Affairs Committee**

HB 1177

Brief Description: Supporting access to state recreation lands by disabled veterans.

Sponsors: Representatives Muri, Kilduff, Ryu, Smith, Shea, Bergquist, Stanford, Sells, Kretz, McDonald, Reeves, Irwin and Tarleton.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides holders of the State Parks Lifetime Veteran Disability Pass the same access to state recreational lands as the Discover Pass.
- Waives any penalty for failure to display a Discover Pass for a person who has obtained, or is eligible for, a Lifetime Veteran Disability Pass.

Hearing Date: 2/2/17

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

Background:

The State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) charges admission and camping fees for state park access. Under the park passes program, the State Parks issues different park passes for specially designated groups that qualify for discounts or exemptions from park fees. The Lifetime Veteran Disability Pass entitles any state resident who is a veteran with at least a 30 percent service-related disability to free admission to any state park and waiver of any campsite fees.

In 2011 the Legislature created the Discover Pass to help recover the costs for the operation and management of state lands used for recreational activities. The Discover Pass establishes a user fee for motor vehicle access to recreational areas managed by the State Parks, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) (collectively "the agencies").

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.

A Discover Pass costs \$30 per year and may be used for up to two vehicles. A day-use permit is also available for \$10 per day. All money received from the Discover Pass and day-use permits sales are deposited into a special account and distributed to the agencies on a proportional basis established by the Legislature.

A penalty of \$99 is assessed for failing to display a valid pass required for recreational lands. The penalty is reduced to \$59 if the person proves purchase of a pass within 15 days of the violation.

Certain passes and permits issued by the agencies exempt the user from the Discover Pass and day use permits, including: the Vehicle Access Pass issued by the DFW to persons who purchase certain hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing permits; camper registrations; the Annual Natural Investment Permit issued by the State Parks; and a Sno-Park seasonal permit issued by the State Parks for access to designated parks during the wintertime.

Summary of Bill:

The Discover Pass and day-use pass are not required for a person who displays the State Parks Lifetime Veteran Disability Pass. The penalty for failure to display a discover pass or day-use pass is waived if the person has been issued, or is eligible for, a Lifetime Veteran Disability Pass.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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