

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5200

As Passed House:
April 7, 2017

Title: An act relating to allowing spouses to combine volunteer hours for purposes of receiving a complimentary discover pass.

Brief Description: Allowing spouses to combine volunteer hours for purposes of receiving a complimentary discover pass.

Sponsors: Senators Becker, Warnick, Fain, Bailey, Brown, Hasegawa and Rolfes.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Environment: 3/20/17, 3/28/17 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/7/17, 93-3.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows married spouses to obtain a complimentary Discover Pass in exchange for the collective performance of 24 hours of service on volunteer projects sanctioned by the Department of Natural Resources, the State Parks and Recreation Commission, or the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Fitzgibbon, Chair; Peterson, Vice Chair; Taylor, Ranking Minority Member; Maycumber, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Dye, Fey, Kagi and McBride.

Staff: Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

Background:

The Discover Pass is an annual pass that allows a motor vehicle to park or operate on state recreation lands managed by the State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks), the

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Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). A Discover Pass contains spaces for two motor vehicle license plate numbers.

The cost of an annual Discover Pass is \$30. The cost of a day-use permit, which serves the same function as the annual pass but is only valid for one calendar day, is \$10. A vehicle access pass is a pass issued during the purchase of a qualifying hunting or fishing license by the DFW. A vehicle access pass may be displayed instead of a Discover Pass or day-use permit on DFW recreation lands. A number of exemptions exist to Discover Pass, vehicle access pass, or day-use permit display requirements, including for vehicles camping in a state park or driving on roads operated by the DNR or the DFW.

One complementary Discover Pass must be provided to a volunteer that performs 24 hours of service in a year on volunteer projects sanctioned by the DNR, the DFW, or State Parks. Agencies must provide volunteers with vouchers identifying their volunteer hours for each project. Vouchers are redeemable for a Discover Pass when provided to the DNR, the DFW, or State Parks.

Summary of Bill:

Married spouses may obtain a complimentary Discover Pass in exchange for the collective performance of 24 hours of service on volunteer projects sanctioned by the DNR, State Parks, or the DFW.

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) Outdoor recreation fans, including backcountry horsemen and bike riding groups, volunteer thousands of hours and millions of dollars' worth of labor to keep trails on public lands in good condition. We should more appropriately thank our volunteers by providing the flexibility for married spouses to combine their volunteer hours towards a free Discover Pass. The option to combine volunteer hours for credit towards a Discover Pass would have been included in the original legislation had the idea arisen at the time, but it has proven harder to amend the structure of the Discover Pass after enactment. The Discover Pass has proved to be a strong revenue stream for the state, and is successful in comparison to other state park passes. The fiscal note of this bill shows a cost that is lower than the cost of reintroducing this legislation next year. This bill has been introduced for several years in a row and passed unanimously out of the Senate.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Becker, prime sponsor; Jim King, Citizens for Parks and Recreation; and Grant Nelson, Washington Off Highway Vehicle Alliance and Northwest Motorcycle Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.