

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5300

As Passed Senate, February 28, 2025

Title: An act relating to leasing authority of the state parks and recreation commission at St. Edward State Park.

Brief Description: Concerning the leasing authority of the state parks and recreation commission at St. Edward State Park.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Local Government (originally sponsored by Senators Stanford, Valdez, Holy and Nobles; by request of Parks and Recreation Commission).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Local Government: 1/30/25, 2/06/25 [DPS].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 2/28/25, 48-0.

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Removes the provisions which granted the State Parks and Recreation Commission authority to enter into a 62-year lease for property at Saint Edward State Park.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5300 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Salomon, Chair; Lovelett, Vice Chair; Torres, Ranking Member; Bateman and Goehner.

Staff: Rohan Bhattacharjee (786-7534)

Background: The State Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) manages a system of over 120 parks and properties covering over 138,000 acres throughout the state,

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including a variety of facilities, historic buildings, and recreation programs. Among the properties managed by the Commission is Saint Edward State Park (Saint Edward) in King County. Saint Edward encompasses 316 acres of buildings, recreational facilities, and undeveloped outdoor spaces, including several buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 2016, the Legislature directed the Department of Commerce (Commerce), in consultation with the Commission, to conduct a study of the economic feasibility of public or nonprofit uses of property at Saint Edward. The study was required to consider the cost estimates for maintenance and building renovation, traffic implications of potential uses, limitations imposed by the National Park Service because of federal Land and Water Conservation Fund restrictions and land use codes, and data from previous studies of potential uses of the Saint Edward Seminary building.

If the Commission determined that Commerce's study failed to identify an economically viable public or nonprofit use for the property, the Commission was permitted to lease certain property at Saint Edward for 62 years and was permitted to enter into a lease upon an affirmative vote of five members of the Commission. The property at Saint Edward that qualified for a 62-year lease after a five-vote Commission authorization is limited to the main seminary building, the pool building, the gymnasium, two adjacent parking lots, and other property immediately adjacent to those areas.

In 2020, the Legislature passed House Bill 2601, extending the maximum permissible lease term for state park properties from 50 to 80 years.

Summary of First Substitute Bill: This bill removes the provisions which granted the Commission authority to enter into a 62-year lease for property at Saint Edward.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: A few years ago, the maximum permissible lease term for state parks was increased from 50 to 80 years. This bill will bring parity for Saint Edward with the rest of the state parks. However, the restrictions on the lease should be retained to certain areas within the park.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Derek Stanford, Prime Sponsor; Brian Considine, State Parks, Policy & Gov't Affairs Director.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.