

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2275

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to raising funds for state parks.

Brief Description: Regarding funding of state parks.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives Kessler, B. Sullivan, Kenney, Chase and Hunt).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/22/07 [DPS];
Appropriations: 3/3/07 [DPS(AGNR)].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/10/07, 94-3.
Senate Amended.
Passed Senate: 4/9/07, 45-0.
House Concurred.
Passed House: 4/16/07, 91-4.
Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows motor vehicle owners to make a voluntary donation of \$5 to fund state parks at the time of initial or renewal registration, applicable to registrations due or to become due on or after January 1, 2008.
- Creates a task force to develop recommendations relating to management, tourism, visitor services, and educational opportunities at the capitol campus.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives B. Sullivan, Chair; Blake, Vice Chair; Kretz, Ranking Minority Member; Warnick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Eickmeyer, Grant, Hailey, Kagi, Lantz, McCoy, Newhouse, Orcutt, Strow and VanDeWege.

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.

Staff: Jaclyn Ford (786-7339).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 34 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Dunshee, Vice Chair; Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Bailey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Buri, Chandler, Cody, Conway, Darneille, Dunn, Ericks, Fromhold, Grant, Haigh, Hinkle, Hunt, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Kretz, Linville, McDermott, McDonald, McIntire, Morrell, Pettigrew, Priest, Schual-Berke, Seaquist, P. Sullivan and Walsh.

Staff: Alicia Dunkin (786-7178).

Background:

The State Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account

All receipts from user fees, concessions, leases, and other state park-based activities are deposited into the State Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account (Account). Expenditures from the Account are used for operating state parks, developing and renovating park facilities, undertaking deferred maintenance, enhancing park stewardship, and other state park purposes. Expenditures from the Account may be made only after appropriation by the Legislature.

License Fees

A \$30 license tab fee is required per year for motor vehicles, regardless of year, value, make, or model. The motor vehicles required to pay the \$30 include cars, sport utility vehicles, motorcycles, and motor homes.

Trucks, motor trucks, truck tractors, road tractors, tractors, buses, auto stages, and for-hire vehicles with a seating capacity of more than six also pay an annual license fee based on the weight of the vehicle. Vehicles with a declared gross weight of 10,000 pounds or less pay an annual license fee between \$40 and \$62, depending on their weight.

Capitol Campus The Department of General Administration (GA) is responsible for the stewardship, preservation, operation, and maintenance of the state capitol public and historic facilities subject to the policy direction of the State Capitol Committee. The GA is charged with providing the proper care, heating, lighting, and repair of the buildings on the state capitol grounds. The mission of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (Parks Commission) is to acquire, operate, enhance, and protect a diverse system of recreational, cultural, historical, and natural sites which include 120 developed parks and recreation programs. State Parks is governed by a board of seven volunteer citizens appointed by the Governor.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Volunteer Parks DonationThe Department of Licensing (DOL) will provide an opportunity to donate an additional \$5 at a vehicle's initial registration or renewal. The fee will be deposited into the State Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account to be used for the operation and maintenance of state parks. The DOL will begin collecting the donations on registrations due on or after January 1, 2008.

Capitol Campus Task Force

The Director of GA and the Parks Commission will convene a task force composed of legislative representatives, gubernatorial representatives, representatives from the Supreme Court, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, an Olympian city official, and two citizens of Washington to develop recommendations relating to the management of the capitol campus, tourism, visitor services, and educational opportunities at the capitol campus. The task force will report back to the Legislature by November 1, 2007. The report will include recommendations for the best management structure for the capitol campus; how to promote tourism to the capitol campus; how to enrich the educational experience offered for visitors to the capitol campus; how to promote the architecture, horticulture, and art of the capitol campus; how to increase interagency coordination regarding management of the capitol campus area; and how to increase volunteer opportunities at the capitol campus.

The task force expires July 1, 2008..

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: (Agriculture & Natural Resources)

(In support) Approximately 7 percent of the population would donate the \$5 at the time of registration renewal, based on the estimate of people who visit the parks. The State Parks and Recreation Commission does not have a stable funding source, and tends to be the last agency to receive funds. The parks need a stable, sustainable funding source since the parking fees were abolished last year.

(Neutral) State parks would receive approximately \$2 million from donations.

(With concerns) The process for renewals will be affected by the \$5 donation. The proper allocation of fees collected will require administrative time and additional costs.

(Opposed) None.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: (Appropriations)

None.

Persons Testifying: (Agriculture & Natural Resources) (In support) Representative Kessler, prime sponsor; and Amber Lewis and Don Hall, Washington Federation of State Employees.

(Neutral) Fred Romero, State Parks and Recreation Commission.

(With concerns) Thad Duvall, Washington State Association of County Auditors.

Persons Testifying: (Appropriations) None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (Agriculture & Natural Resources)
None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (Appropriations) None.