

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5243

As Reported By House Committee On:
Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to exempting disabled veterans from reservation fees for state parks.

Brief Description: Exempting disabled veterans from reservation fees for state parks.

Sponsors: Senators Oke, Rasmussen, Winsley, Morton, Benton, Prince, Stevens, Horn, Zarelli, Long, Roach, Swecker, Deccio, McCaslin, Hale, Sellar, Johnson, Bauer, McAuliffe and Haugen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 3/21/97, 4/3/97 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Buck, Chairman; Sump, Vice Chairman; Thompson, Vice Chairman; Regala, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander; Anderson; Chandler; Hatfield; Pennington and Sheldon.

Staff: Linda Byers (786-7129).

Background: If a person is a Washington resident and a veteran with a service-connected disability of at least 30 percent, then that person is entitled to a free lifetime veteran's disability pass from the State Parks and Recreation Commission. The pass entitles the veteran to free admission to any state park and the veteran and the members of his or her camping unit to free use of any campsite within a state park.

Summary of Bill: A Washington veteran with such a service-connected disability is also entitled to an exemption from any state park reservation fees.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: This continues a tradition of supporting veterans. The reservation fees are a problem because some veterans do not have credit cards. Many are on fixed incomes. Veterans are willing to donate their time to help improve state parks. Though there is a fiscal impact, the State Parks and Recreation Commission is able and pleased to comply with this change.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Bob Oke, prime sponsor; Beau Bergeron, Department of Veterans Affairs; Glenn Galbraith, Paralyzed Veterans of America; and Rex Derr, State Parks and Recreation Commission (all in favor).