

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6147

As Reported By House Committee On:
Natural Resources

Title: An act relating to state parks.

Brief Description: Creating the Washington state parks gift foundation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation (originally sponsored by Senators Jacobsen, Swecker, Thibaudeau, McAuliffe, Oke and Kohl-Welles).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources: 2/22/00, 2/23/00 [DP].

<p>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Directs the State Parks and Recreation Commission to create a nonprofit corporation to help raise funds to benefit state parks.
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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Buck, Republican Co-Chair; Regala, Democratic Co-Chair; Anderson, Democratic Vice Chair; Sump, Republican Vice Chair; Doumit; Ericksen; Pennington and Stensen.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives G. Chandler; Clements; Eickmeyer and Rockefeller.

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background:

Increased demands upon the state's park system has made it difficult for the state to maintain and expand its park facilities and services. Nonprofit organizations have been created in some cities and other states to help provide support to the park systems.

Summary of Bill:

The Parks and Recreation Commission is directed to create a nonprofit corporation known as the Washington State Parks Gift Foundation for the purpose of soliciting support for the state parks system, cooperating with other organizations, and encouraging gifts to support and improve state parks. The commission must file the articles of incorporation to create the foundation by September 1, 2000.

The foundation is governed by a board of 15 directors who are initially appointed by the Governor. Subsequent board members are elected by the general membership of the foundation. Board members must have collective experience in business, charitable giving, outdoor recreation, and parks administration. Board members serve three-year terms, except for the initial board members who serve staggered terms. A board member may not serve more than three terms.

The foundation must be organized to achieve federal tax-exempt status as soon as practicable. The foundation is required to actively solicit contributions from individuals and groups for the benefit of state parks, and must develop criteria for either the creation of an endowment, awarding grants, or both. A competitive grant process must be conducted by the foundation at least annually to award funds to state parks. Only projects suggested by the Parks and Recreation Commission are eligible for funding by the foundation. Money provided by the foundation may not supplant pre-existing fund sources.

The foundation is not an agency, instrumentality, or political subdivision of the state. The foundation may not disburse public funds.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Several states have created similar foundations. Many corporations or foundations will contribute to a foundation like this, but will not contribute directly to a state agency.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Jim King, Coalition for Parks and Recreation; and Rex Derr, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.