

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5843

As Passed Senate, March 11, 2015

Title: An act relating to outdoor recreation.

Brief Description: Concerning outdoor recreation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Ranker, Parlette, Pearson, Rolfes, Hewitt, Litzow, Conway, Hasegawa and McAuliffe).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 2/11/15 [DP-WM].

Ways & Means: 2/24/15, 2/26/15 [DPS, w/oRec].

Passed Senate: 3/11/15, 46-3.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Pearson, Chair; Dinsel, Vice Chair; Hatfield, Ranking Minority Member; Chase, Hewitt, McAuliffe and Warnick.

Staff: Curt Gavigan (786-7437)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5843 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Hill, Chair; Braun, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Ranking Member; Keiser, Assistant Ranking Member on the Capital Budget; Ranker, Ranking Minority Member, Operating; Billig, Conway, Fraser, Hasegawa, Hatfield, Kohl-Welles, Parlette, Rolfes and Warnick.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Dammeier, Vice Chair; Honeyford, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Bailey, Becker, Brown, Hewitt, Padden and Schoesler.

Staff: Sherry McNamara (786-7402)

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.

Background: No Child Left Inside Grant Program. In 2007 the Legislature established a grant program to provide funding for outdoor education and recreation programs by agencies, nonprofits, and school and after-school programs. This program has become known as the no child left inside grant program. The Director of the State Parks and Recreation Commission, in cooperation with an advisory committee, was charged with establishing grant priorities while considering factors such as:

- reduction of dropout rates;
- use of natural-resources based curriculum;
- contribution to health lifestyles through recreation and nutrition; and
- ongoing program evaluation and assessment.

The 2007 operating budget provided \$1.5 million to the grant program. In 2008, 26 grants were awarded from that appropriation.

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation. In February 2014, the Governor issued Executive Order 14-01 which established the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation (Task Force). The Task Force was directed to develop an action plan and recommendations on topics to include the management, transformation, and development of Washington's outdoor recreation assets and programs. The Task Force met throughout the interim, with plans and recommendations submitted in the fall.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill: The list of considerations that must be considered in setting priorities for the no child left inside grant program is changed to include programs that use veterans for at least 50 percent of program implementation or administration.

Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the Governor must appoint and maintain a senior policy advisor on outdoor recreation to focus on promoting, increasing participation in, and increasing opportunities for outdoor recreation. The advisor must have a particular focus on achieving economic development and job growth through outdoor recreation. Additionally, the advisor is subject to Senate confirmation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill (Natural Resources & Parks):
PRO: This bill is the product of a great deal of work over the interim by the Blue Ribbon Task Force. It represents the opportunity to increase outdoor recreation in the state, and continue work on past efforts to get more kids outside. The no child left inside program has a proven track record, and the policy position in the Governor's office will be a valuable asset. This is more than just recreation, the outdoors is a huge economic driver and can change people's lives for the better. Outdoor experiences make people want to protect natural resources. There are many other ideas discussed by the Task Force not reflected in this bill.

Persons Testifying (Natural Resources & Parks): PRO: Senator Ranker, prime sponsor; Senator Parlette; Doug Levy, WA Recreation and Park Assn., Recreational Boating Assn. of WA; Martin LeBlanc, IslandWood; Marc Berejka, REI; Oak Rankin, Darrington; Joshua Brandon, Project Rebirth-Veterans; Carl Burke, Fish NW, NW Sportsfishing Assn., Puget Sound Anglers; Jennifer McNamara, Dept. of Health; Daniel Farber, State Parks; Peter Schrappen, NW Marine Trade Assn.; Courtney Abner, Seattle; Becca Polglase, Mountaineers; Terry Kohl, Backcountry Horsemen of WA; Scott Richards, The Nature Conservancy.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill (Ways & Means): PRO: We think this is a great bang for the buck. There are 96 people signed in to support this bill. REI is proud to be a part of this state's significant outdoor recreation industry. It generates over \$20 billion in economic activity. Our state's natural beauty is a competitive advantage, and we need high-level state support to make the most of that advantage. Not only do the outdoors directly support jobs, they support public health, healthy communities, and a healthy environment. Winter sports in Washington are a billion-dollar industry. We think that this bill supports jobs and expands the outdoor recreation industry. It is very important to note that the new generation of Washingtonians are not getting outside. This bill is the perfect combination of a public and private partnership.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Senator Ranker, prime sponsor, Taldi Walter, REI Inc.; Peter Schrappen, NW Marine Trade Assn.; John Gifford, Pacific NW Ski Areas Assn.; Martin LeBlanc, IslandWood; Jeff Chapman, Back Country Horsemen of WA; Scott Sigmon, Coastal Conservation Assn.; Howard Briggs, citizen.