

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESB 6034

C 86 L 14
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning state parks partnership opportunities.

Sponsors: Senators Pearson, Hargrove, McCoy, Mullet and McAuliffe; by request of Parks and Recreation Commission.

Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Parks

House Committee on Environment

House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government & Information Technology

Background: Under current law, the State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) has broad authority to manage the use, care, and administration of state parks. Specifically, State Parks may provide environmental interpretive activities for purposes that:

- explain the functions, history, and cultural aspects of ecosystems;
- explain the relationship between human needs, human behaviors and attitudes, and the environment; and
- offer experiences and information to increase appreciation and stewardship of the environment and its uses.

State Parks may solicit assistance from and enter into agreements with private organizations and public agencies interested in conservation and environmental interpretation. No commercial advertising is allowed under these agreements, but logos or sponsorship credit lines are permitted.

In 2000 the Legislature directed the creation of the State Parks Gift Foundation (Foundation) to solicit support for State Parks, cooperate with other organizations, and encourage gifts to support State Parks. The Legislature established requirements for initial board membership, terms, and succession. Among its other roles, the Foundation awards grants to State Parks for eligible projects submitted to the Foundation for funding.

Summary: The interpretation role of State Parks is reemphasized and modified to include scenic, natural, cultural, and historical interpretive activities. This includes specifying authority to:

- explain the diverse human heritage and cultural changes over time in the state;
- offer experiences and information to increase understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of natural, cultural, ethnic, and artistic heritage; and

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.

- explain the need for and methods to achieve natural, cultural, and historical resource protection and preservation.

The specific prohibition on commercial advertising in state parks is removed. The commission, in consultation with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, must follow specified standards and conditions before approving advertising on or in State Parks lands or buildings. State Parks is prohibited from renaming a state park after a commercial entity, product, or service, as part of a partnership or advertising agreement.

State Parks is granted general authority to solicit assistance and enter into agreements with other public agencies, the State Parks Foundation, private entities, employee business units, and tribes that are interested in stewardship and interpretation. Considerations in entering into such agreements include the entity's financial ability to meet its responsibilities, the entity's expertise in performing the duties, the resulting financial benefit to the state, and whether the agreement advances the public purpose of state parks. All agreements must include performance measures. State Parks' authority to enter into partnership agreements does not include the ability to change the name of a state park after a corporate or commercial entity, product, or service.

The Foundation name is revised to eliminate the word "gift" from its title. The Foundation's purpose is expanded to include the support of groups and organizations willing to contribute to the operation, instead of just the preservation, restoration, and enhancement, of the state park system.

In addition to providing grants to State Parks, the Foundation may award funds to friend groups and other organizations which propose projects or programs that are for the sole benefit of state parks.

The terms, method of appointment, and authority of the Foundation's board of directors are established under the statutes governing nonprofit corporations.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	45	3	
House	77	20	(House amended)
House	79	18	(House reconsidered)
Senate	47	2	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 12, 2014