

HB 1799-S.E - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Creates the task force on state public recreational lands and public safety.

Requires the task force to conduct a comprehensive review of law enforcement issues in and around state parks and lands, including but not limited to: (1) The extent to which illegal activity in and around state parks and lands threatens public safety and natural resources; and

(2) The ability of the current state and local law enforcement to respond to illegal activity on or near public recreational lands.

Provides that, by December 15, 2005, the task force shall provide a final report of its recommendations, including any draft legislation to implement the recommendations. The report shall be submitted to the chief clerk of the house of representatives and the secretary of the senate.

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1799-S

May 11, 2005

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,
The House of Representatives of the State of Washington

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning, without my approval as to Section 1, Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 1799 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to park rangers employed by the state parks and recreation commission."

Section 1 of Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 1799 states the Legislature's finding that "law enforcement functions at state parks and lands are insufficient to adequately protect the public and our natural resources." I agree that the safety of people, property, and natural resources on our public lands is important, and that more can be done to improve safety. But I have high regard for our park rangers and others who enforce the laws and protect our public lands, and do not believe the Legislature's conclusion is warranted. I am also concerned such language, while not so intended, could be misused to increase taxpayers' liability for harm that should be the responsibility of those who violate our laws.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Section 1 of Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 1799.

With the exception of Section 1, Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 1799 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine O. Gregoire

Governor