
Environment Committee

HB 1741

Brief Description: Allowing disabled persons to access public recreational sites or lands without a discover pass, vehicle access pass, or day-use permit.

Sponsors: Representatives Kretz, Blake and Condotta.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Exempts persons that display a disability pass, card, decal, or license plate from requirements to display a Discover Pass or day-use permit when operating or parking a motor vehicle on Department of Natural Resources and Department of Fish and Wildlife lands.

Hearing Date: 2/10/15

Staff: Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

Background:

A Discover Pass or day-use permit must be displayed when operating or parking a motor vehicle in recreation areas on state lands managed by State Parks, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). A Discover Pass costs \$30 per year, while a day-use permit costs \$10 per day. Monetary penalties may be assessed for failure to comply with the Discover Pass and day-use permit requirements. Certain DFW lands may be accessed with a vehicle access pass that is issued in conjunction with certain hunting and recreational fishing licenses.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues disabled vehicle access passes to persons who meet any one of several criteria, either permanently or temporarily, including a limited ability to walk or see. A person's disability must be determined by a licensed physician or other health care professional and must be included as part of an application to the DOL. The DOL issues several types of disabled vehicle access passes, including placards and special license plates.

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State law entitles disabled Washington residents to free admission to State Parks, as well as a 50 percent reduction in State Park campsite rental fees. In order to be eligible for free admission and reduced camping fees, the person must demonstrate, in an application for a State Parks Disability Pass, that the person receives Social Security or other government benefits for that disability, is legally blind or deaf, or possesses a DOT-issued disability card, decal, or special license plate. A DOT-issued placard may be used in place of the State Parks disability pass for purposes of receiving free State Parks admission and reduced camping fees.

Summary of Bill:

Persons who display a disability pass issued by State Parks or the DOL are exempt from the requirements to display a Discover Pass or day-use pass while operating or parking a motor vehicle on DNR and DFW lands.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 2, 2015.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.