

FINAL BILL REPORT

E2SHB 2667

C 103 L 16
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning administrative processes of the state parks and recreation commission that require a majority vote of the commission.

Sponsors: House Committee on Capital Budget (originally sponsored by Representatives Farrell, Holy, Pollet, Shea, Nealey, Walsh, Scott, Kagi, Senn, Johnson and Short).

House Committee on Environment
House Committee on Capital Budget

Background:

The State Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) manages a system of over 100 parks with a variety of facilities, historic buildings, and recreation programs. Among the properties managed by the Commission is Saint Edward State Park (Saint Edward) in King County. With partial financial support from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, Washington acquired Saint Edward in 1977 from the Seattle Catholic Archdiocese, which had sited a boy's school and seminary on the property. Today, Saint Edward encompasses 316 acres of buildings, recreational facilities, and undeveloped outdoor spaces, including several buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The state parks system is administered by a seven-member citizen commission appointed by the Governor, with one commissioner appointed as the Commission chair. The Commission hires a director to manage the day-to-day operations of the state parks system. Commissioners serve six-year terms, with any vacancies to be filled by gubernatorial appointments.

Certain items of Commission business, such as obtaining or leasing lands for the state parks system, require a majority vote of the Commission. However, unanimous consent of the Commission is required in order to lease state-owned land for a period of longer than 20 years, and in order to sell or exchange state park land. Leases of state park property by the Commission are limited to a maximum term of 50 years.

Summary:

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.

The Department of Commerce, in consultation with the Commission, must conduct a study of the economic feasibility of public or nonprofit uses of the seminary building at Saint Edward. The study must be submitted to the Commission, the Governor's office, and the Legislature by July 31, 2016. The study must consider the cost estimates for maintenance and building renovation, traffic implications of potential uses, limitations imposed by the National Park Service as a result of federal Land and Water Conservation Fund restrictions and land use codes, and data from previous studies of potential uses of the Saint Edward seminary building.

If the Commission determines that the Department of Commerce's study has failed to identify an economically viable public or nonprofit use for the property, the Commission may lease certain property at Saint Edward under different constraints than usually apply to leases by the Commission. Under these conditions, the Commission may lease certain property for 62 years instead of the normal 50-year maximum, and may enter into this lease upon an affirmative vote of five of the seven members of the Commission, instead of the usual requirement for unanimous Commission approval. The property at Saint Edward that qualifies for a 62-year lease after a five-vote Commission authorization is limited to the main seminary building, the pool building, the gymnasium, two adjacent parking lots, and other property immediately adjacent to those areas.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	93	3
Senate	45	4

Effective: June 9, 2016