



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 327**

*January Session, 2005*

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1268

*Senate, April 13, 2005*

The Committee on Environment reported through SEN. STILLMAN of the 20th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## **AN ACT CONCERNING STATE PARKS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 22a-27h of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2005*):

3 (a) There is established a fund to be known as the "Conservation  
4 Fund" which shall be held by the Treasurer. Within the Conservation  
5 Fund, there is established and created an account to be known as the  
6 "conservation account". The Conservation Fund may include other  
7 accounts separate and apart from the conservation account.  
8 Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes to the contrary,  
9 any moneys required by law to be deposited in the Conservation Fund  
10 shall be deposited therein and credited to the conservation account.  
11 Any balance remaining in the fund at the end of any fiscal year shall be  
12 carried forward in the conservation account for the fiscal year next  
13 succeeding. The conservation account shall be used by the Department  
14 of Environmental Protection for the administration of the central office  
15 and conservation and preservation programs authorized by the

16 general statutes.

17 (b) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes to the  
18 contrary, (1) on and after June 1, 1990, [(1)] (A) the amount of any fee  
19 received by the Department of Environmental Protection which is  
20 attributable to the establishment of a new fee or the increase of an  
21 existing fee pursuant to the provisions of title 23 or 26, and [(2)] (B) any  
22 fees paid to the department, pursuant to said titles, which are in excess  
23 of the total fees paid to the department pursuant to said titles for the  
24 fiscal year ending June 30, 1989, shall be deposited directly into the  
25 fund established by subsection (a) of this section and credited to the  
26 conservation account. The Commissioner of Environmental Protection  
27 shall certify to the Treasurer, with respect to each such fee received on  
28 and after June 1, 1990, the amount of such fee which shall be credited  
29 to the General Fund and the amount of such fee which shall be  
30 credited to the conservation account, and (2) on and after July 1, 2005,  
31 all fees collected by the department pursuant to title 23 for parking,  
32 admission, boat launching, camping and other recreational uses of  
33 state parks, forests, boat launches and other state facilities shall be  
34 deposited into the Conservation Fund and credited to the conservation  
35 account established by subsection (a) of this section.

36 (c) There is established an account known as the maintenance,  
37 repair and improvement account. Said account shall be an account of  
38 the Conservation Fund. All moneys collected from any rent paid by  
39 any person occupying or otherwise using any property in the custody  
40 and control of the Commissioner of Environmental Protection,  
41 including houses or other buildings, shall be deposited into the  
42 account unless the commissioner enters into a written agreement, signs  
43 an instrument or issues a license which specifically states otherwise.  
44 Said account may also receive moneys from private or public sources,  
45 or from the federal government or a municipal government.  
46 Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes or any  
47 regulation adopted thereunder, any moneys deposited into the account  
48 shall be deposited in the Conservation Fund and credited to the  
49 maintenance, repair and improvement account. Any balance

50 remaining in the account at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried  
51 forward in the account for the fiscal year next succeeding. The account  
52 shall be available to the Commissioner of Environmental Protection for  
53 maintaining, making improvements to, erecting structures on, or  
54 repairing any property in the custody and control of the Commissioner  
55 of Environmental Protection, including houses and other buildings.  
56 Nothing in this section shall prevent the commissioner from obtaining  
57 or using funds from sources other than the account, for maintaining,  
58 making improvements to, erecting structures on, or repairing any  
59 property in the custody and control of said commissioner, including  
60 houses and other buildings.

61 Sec. 2. Section 10-397 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
62 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2005*):

63 (a) There are established five regional tourism districts, each of  
64 which shall promote and market districts as regional leisure and  
65 business traveler destinations to stimulate economic growth. The  
66 districts shall be as follows:

67 (1) The eastern regional district, which shall consist of Ashford,  
68 Bozrah, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Colchester, Columbia,  
69 Coventry, East Lyme, Eastford, Franklin, Griswold, Groton, Hampton,  
70 Killingly, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Lyme, Mansfield, Montville, New  
71 London, North Stonington, Norwich, Old Lyme, Plainfield, Pomfret,  
72 Preston, Putnam, Salem, Scotland, Sprague, Sterling, Stonington,  
73 Thompson, Union, Voluntown, Waterford, Willington, Windham and  
74 Woodstock;

75 (2) The central regional district, which shall consist of Andover,  
76 Avon, Berlin, Bloomfield, Bolton, Canton, Chester, Cromwell, Deep  
77 River, East Granby, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Hartford, East  
78 Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Essex, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby,  
79 Haddam, Hartford, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, Meriden,  
80 Middletown, New Britain, Newington, Old Saybrook, Plainville,  
81 Portland, Rocky Hill, Somers, South Windsor, Southington, Simsbury,  
82 Stafford, Suffield, Tolland, Vernon, Windsor Locks, West Hartford,

83 Westbrook, Wethersfield and Windsor;

84 (3) The northwestern regional district, which shall consist of  
85 Ansonia, Barkhamsted, Beacon Falls, Bethel, Bethlehem, Bridgewater,  
86 Bristol, Brookfield, Burlington, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall,  
87 Danbury, Derby, Goshen, Hartland, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield,  
88 Middlebury, Morris, Naugatuck, New Fairfield, New Hartford, New  
89 Milford, Newtown, Norfolk, North Canaan, Oxford, Plymouth,  
90 Prospect, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, Salisbury, Seymour, Sharon,  
91 Sherman, Southbury, Thomaston, Torrington, Warren, Washington,  
92 Waterbury, Watertown, Winchester, Wolcott and Woodbury;

93 (4) The south central regional district, which shall consist of  
94 Bethany, Branford, Cheshire, Clinton, Durham, East Haven, Guilford,  
95 Hamden, Killingworth, Madison, Middlefield, Milford, Orange, New  
96 Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Wallingford, West Haven and  
97 Woodbridge;

98 (5) The southwestern regional district, which shall consist of  
99 Bridgeport, Darien, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, New Canaan,  
100 Monroe, Norwalk, Shelton, Stamford, Stratford, Trumbull, Weston,  
101 Westport and Wilton.

102 (b) Each regional tourism district shall be overseen by a board of  
103 directors consisting of one representative from the Friends of  
104 Connecticut State Parks, Inc., appointed by such organization, and one  
105 representative from each municipality within the district, appointed by  
106 the legislative body of the municipality and, where the legislative body  
107 is a town meeting, by the board of selectmen. Any such member of a  
108 board of directors shall serve for a term of three years. In addition, the  
109 board of directors may appoint up to twenty-one persons representing  
110 tourism interests within the district to serve on the board. No board  
111 member shall be deemed a state employee for serving on said board.  
112 All appointments to the board of directors shall be reported to the  
113 executive director of the Connecticut Commission on Culture and  
114 Tourism.

115 (c) The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, as defined in  
116 section 1-200, shall apply to each regional tourism district.

117 (d) Not later than October 1, 2003, the commission shall assist each  
118 regional tourism district in establishing a committee to draft a charter  
119 and bylaws for the regional tourism district and to organize the initial  
120 meeting of the board of directors of the district, to be held no later than  
121 October 15, 2003.

122 (e) Each regional tourism district shall (1) comply with uniform  
123 standards for accounting and reporting expenditures that are  
124 established by the commission in accordance with section 10-392 and  
125 are based on industry accounting standards developed by the  
126 International Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus or other  
127 national organizations related to tourism, and (2) on or before January  
128 first of each year, submit to the commission, the Office of Policy and  
129 Management and the Office of Fiscal Analysis an independent audit in  
130 accordance with the provisions of sections 4-230 to 4-236, inclusive.

131 (f) Each regional tourism district shall solicit and may accept private  
132 funds for the promotion of tourism within its towns and cities and  
133 shall coordinate its activities with any private nonprofit tourist  
134 association within the district and within this state, that promotes  
135 tourism industry businesses in this state, in order to foster cooperation  
136 in the promotion of such businesses. Any funds received by a regional  
137 tourism district may be deposited in the account established in section  
138 10-395 or in an account established by such tourism district to receive  
139 such funds.

|   |              |         |
|---|--------------|---------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: |              |         |
| Section 1   | July 1, 2005 | 22a-27h |
| Sec. 2  | July 1, 2005 | 10-397  |

**ENV** Joint Favorable Subst.

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

| Agency Affected                        | Fund-Effect       | FY 06 \$    | FY 07 \$    |
|--|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Department of Environmental Protection | GF - Revenue Loss | (1,700,000) | (1,700,000) |
|  | CF - Revenue Gain | 1,700,000   | 1,700,000   |

Note: GF=General Fund; CF=Conservation Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

This bill results in a revenue gain to the Conservation Fund of the Department of Environmental Protection of approximately \$1.7 million per year and a commensurate revenue loss to the General Fund. The bill deposits all revenue generated by admission, camping, boat launch and parking fees at DEP’s parks and forests into the Conservation account of the Conservation Fund. This revenue is used for the expenses associated with administering and managing the state parks, camp grounds and other recreational facilities under the purview of DEP. It is anticipated that the increased revenue will be used to hire park staff.

Adding an additional representative to each regional tourism district board is not anticipated to have a fiscal impact.

**OLR Bill Analysis**

sSB 1268

**AN ACT CONCERNING STATE PARKS****SUMMARY:**

This bill increases the amount of revenue that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) must deposit into the Conservation Fund's conservation account. By law, DEP must use conservation account funds for the administration of the central office and for the conservation and preservation programs it oversees.

The bill also adds a representative from the Friends of Connecticut State Parks, Inc., appointed by that organization, to each regional tourism district's board of directors.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2005

**ALL FEES FOR USE OF AND ACTIVITIES AT PARKS AND FORESTS TO THE CONSERVATION ACCOUNT**

By law, DEP must (1) deposit certain fees into the General Fund and the conservation account of the Conservation Fund, which is held by the treasurer, and (2) use the conservation account funds for the administration of the central office and the conservation and preservation programs it oversees. Current law requires DEP to deposit into the conservation account (1) the amount of any new fee related to activities at parks and forests, fishing, hunting, trapping, and water, among other things, and (2) any increase to fees for those places and activities occurring since June 30, 1990. DEP must certify to the treasurer the amount of fees collected that will be credited to the General Fund and to the conservation account respectively. The bill requires DEP, instead, to credit all the revenue it collects, (e.g., not just new or increased fees since June 1, 1990) specifically related to parks and forests for parking, admission, boat launching, camping, and other recreational uses to the conservation account.

**BACKGROUND**

**Tourism Districts**

The law establishes five regional tourism districts to promote and market themselves as regional leisure and business traveler destinations to stimulate economic growth. A board of directors oversees each district and consists of one member from each municipality, appointed by the legislative body or the board of selectmen as the case may be, in the respective region. Board members serve for three years. The board of directors may also appoint up to 21 people representing tourism in their region to serve on the board.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 28 Nay 0