



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 599

February Session, 2012

Substitute Senate Bill No. 85

Senate, May 2, 2012

The Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding reported through SEN. DAILY of the 33rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.

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

1 Section 1. Section 23-16a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 [The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall
4 phase out the leases of camping sites at shore parks which the State
5 Park and Forest Commission determined were, in the 1970 season,
6 leased for more than three weeks in the aggregate to the same family
7 by reducing their number equally each year, for the next five years.]

8 (a) The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection
9 shall not lease camping sites at shore parks to the same family for more
10 than three weeks during the period commencing on the Saturday
11 before Memorial Day and ending on Labor Day. The commissioner
12 shall (1) lease camping sites to the same family for additional days

13 during such period, provided such family vacates the shore park for a
 14 minimum of five days between leases, (2) lease camping sites prior to
 15 or after such period to a family without regard to such family's
 16 aggregate length of stay, or (3) during such period lease any vacant
 17 camping sites on a first come, first served basis. The commissioner
 18 may adopt regulations in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54
 19 to establish limits on the length of camping site leases. The three-week
 20 lease length limitation in this subsection shall be effective until June 30,
 21 2013, or until such regulations are adopted, whichever is later.

22 (b) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this
 23 section, the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection
 24 shall establish a pilot program from April 16, 2013, to December 31,
 25 2013, inclusive, allowing five per cent of camping sites in shore parks
 26 to be leased by the same family without a limitation on the number of
 27 days leased. Notwithstanding the schedule of fees established
 28 pursuant to section 23-16, the commissioner may charge a nightly fee
 29 of thirty-one dollars per night for such camping sites.

30 (2) On or before February 1, 2014, said commissioner shall report, in
 31 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing
 32 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
 33 relating to the environment and finance, revenue and bonding
 34 regarding the pilot program established pursuant to subdivision (1) of
 35 this subsection. Such report shall include, but not be limited to, a
 36 description of the implementation of the pilot program, its impact
 37 upon the availability of camping sites, the reaction of families using
 38 the camping sites and recommendations for changes, if any, in the
 39 pilot program.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	from passage	23-16a

FIN *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 13 \$	FY 14 \$
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	GF - Potential Revenue Impact	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

Under current law, shore park camp sites may be leased for no more than three weeks total each year to the same party.¹

The bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to instead (1) lease shore park camp sites to the same party for up to three weeks total from the Saturday before Memorial Day to Labor Day, and (2) lease to the same party for additional days during this time period under certain conditions. This is not expected to result in an additional revenue gain as these shore camping sites usually have no vacancies during this time period.

Additionally, the bill requires DEEP to establish a pilot program that allows 5% of shore park camping sites to be leased without a limitation on the number of days leased. For these pilot program sites, the agency may charge a \$31 fee.

To the extent DEEP charges \$31 per night instead of the various current rates² seen below, the following fiscal impacts are anticipated to occur:

¹ Hammonasset and Rocky Neck State Parks.

² All rates are subject to processing fees.

Current Fee	Fee Allowed Under sSB 85	If DEEP Charged \$31, Potential Fiscal Impact
\$20 for In-state residents, tent site	\$31	\$11 Revenue gain per site
\$30 for Non-residents, tent site	\$31	\$1 Revenue gain per site
\$35 for In-state residents, hook-up site	\$31	\$4 Revenue loss per site
\$45 for Non-residents, hook-up site	\$31	\$14 Revenue loss per site
\$70 rustic cabin	\$31	\$39 Revenue loss per site

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and the number of camp reservations made under the pilot program without limitation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 85*****AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPGROUND RESERVATIONS AT CERTAIN STATE PARKS.*****SUMMARY:**

By law, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner may lease state park camping sites to state residents and nonresidents. Current law limits a family to three weeks total each year at each shore park (i.e., Hammonasset and Rocky Neck).

This bill instead requires the DEEP commissioner to lease shore park camping sites:

1. to the same family for up to three weeks total from the Saturday before Memorial Day to Labor Day;
2. to the same family for additional days during this period if the family leaves the park for at least five days between leases;
3. before and after this period regardless of the family's total length of stay; or
4. that are vacant during this period on a first come, first served basis.

The bill authorizes the commissioner to adopt regulations to establish limits on the length of camping site leases. The bill's limitation is effective until June 30, 2013, or until regulations are adopted, whichever is later.

The bill also requires the commissioner to establish a pilot program for the 2013 camping season (i.e., April 16 to December 31) that allows

5% of shore park camping sites to be leased to the same family without a limitation on the number of days leased. For such sites, he may charge a \$31 nightly fee. The commissioner must report, by February 1, 2014, to the Environment and Finance, Revenue and Bonding committees on the pilot program. The report must describe the program implementation, its impact on camping site availability, the reaction of families using the camping sites, and any recommendation for changes to the program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

Legislative History

The Senate referred the bill (File 403) to the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, which reported a substitute bill that changed the fee structure for the long-term camper pilot program, allowing the DEEP commissioner to charge a nightly fee of \$31, instead of twice the amount otherwise charged for similar camping sites. It also added a requirement that the commissioner report to the Environment and Finance, Revenue and Bonding committees on the pilot program.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 29 Nay 0 (03/23/2012)

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 45 Nay 4 (04/20/2012)