

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE PROGRAM REVIEW AND
INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE**

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

March 14, 2014

RB 5369

*An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Program Review and Investigations
Committee Concerning Certain Fiscal And Resource-Related Matters Pertaining To
State Parks.*

The Office of Policy and Management asks that you take no action on RB 5369, "An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Program Review and Investigations Committee Concerning Certain Fiscal And Resource-Related Matters Pertaining to State Parks."

Connecticut's state parks are jewels that benefit every citizen. This year we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of our parks, and to commemorate that the Governor has proposed that Connecticut residents be admitted to our state parks for free for one weekend this summer.

This bill would provide that a portion of the revenue from rentals and other sales at a park be deposited into that park's subaccount for repair, maintenance and improvement.

The Governor's proposed budget, including fringe benefits, would provide \$30.6 million for the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in FY 2015, an increase over this year's \$29.5 million.

The bond funds authorized for capital expenditures related to state parks presently contains an approximate unallocated balance of \$53 million.

This bill is one of many bills - all for worthy causes -- before the General Assembly that would dedicate specified revenue for expressed purposes. This approach would limit the state's flexibility in balancing budgetary needs. Such an array of requirements would harm the ability of government to respond as necessary to developments in the state. It would benefit areas of government - including parks -- that have stronger constituent voices at the expense of those that do not.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss the needs of the state's parks and ways to enhance them in the long- and short-term. But we urge you to take no action on this bill.

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