



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 386

February Session, 2016

Substitute Senate Bill No. 386

Senate, March 31, 2016

The Committee on Environment reported through SEN. KENNEDY of the 12th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY OF STATE PARKS.

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1,
2 2017, the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall
3 submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General
4 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the environment, in
5 accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the
6 establishment of a per-person admission fee at all state parks by July 1,
7 2017. Such report shall include, but not be limited to, a
8 recommendation for the dollar amount of such per-person admission
9 fee that will result in: (1) The amount of such per-person admission
10 fee, when both coupled with and established in lieu of any applicable
11 parking fee at each state park, being comparable to the applicable per-
12 person admission fees and parking fees of state parks located in the
13 states of New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New
14 Hampshire and Maine, and (2) increased revenue from state park

15 admission and parking fees. In developing such recommendation, the
16 commissioner shall account for the continued availability of parking
17 and parking and admission to state parks without fee for disabled
18 veterans and persons sixty-five years of age or older.

19 Sec. 2. Section 23-15d of the 2016 supplement to the general statutes
20 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*
21 *from passage*):

22 (a) Not later than August 15, 2015, the Commissioner of Energy and
23 Environmental Protection shall develop a request for information
24 concerning the operation of concessions, provision of services and
25 offering of recreational amenities at state parks. Such concessions shall
26 include, but not be limited to, year-round concessions and concessions
27 that engage the use of revenue share formulas between the vendor and
28 the department. Such services shall include, but not be limited to,
29 parking options for park patrons, including, but not limited to,
30 advanced reservation parking and convenience or curbside parking.
31 The purpose of such request for information shall be to seek
32 informational documentation for the operation of such concessions,
33 provision of such services and offering of recreational amenities. Not
34 later than September 15, 2015, such request for information shall be
35 forwarded by the commissioner to the Department of Administrative
36 Services for posting on the State Contracting Portal. Concomitantly,
37 the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection shall direct
38 a copy of such request for information to any private vendor known by
39 the commissioner to provide such operation, provision or offering. Not
40 later than December 1, 2015, the commissioner shall forward, to the
41 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance
42 of matters relating to the environment, a copy of any informational
43 documentation received by the commissioner in response to such
44 request for information and a written assessment and evaluation of
45 such informational documentation, including, but not limited to, any
46 recommendation for the offering at state parks of concessions, services
47 and recreational amenities that are not offered at such state parks as of
48 June 22, 2015.

49 (b) Not later than September 1, 2016, the Commissioner of Energy
 50 and Environmental Protection shall direct a copy of the request for
 51 information developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section to
 52 state-wide business associations, chambers of commerce and trade
 53 associations that represent or include members who may have the
 54 capacity to operate or offer one or more concessions, services or
 55 recreational amenities at state parks. The commissioner shall accept
 56 any response to such request for information that is received by the
 57 department pursuant to this subsection. Not later than January 1, 2017,
 58 the commissioner shall forward, to the joint standing committee of the
 59 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the
 60 environment, a copy of any response and informational
 61 documentation received by the commissioner in response to such
 62 request for information pursuant to this subsection.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	23-15d

ENV *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:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None***Explanation***

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to issue a report to the Environment Committee by January 1, 2017 concerning a report on establishing a per-person admission fee at all state parks and copies of responses to a request for information (RFI) on state park concessions, services, and amenities.

As DEEP already developed the RFI pursuant to PA 15-106 there is no fiscal impact.

The Out Years***State Impact:*** None***Municipal Impact:*** None

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 386*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY OF STATE PARKS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) commissioner to provide to the Environment Committee by January 1, 2017 (1) a report on establishing a per-person admission fee at all state parks by July 1, 2017 and (2) copies of responses to a request for information (RFI) on state park concessions, services, and amenities, which DEEP must forward to specified parties by September 1, 2016. (DEEP already developed the RFI pursuant to PA 15-106.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

PER-PERSON STATE PARK ADMISSION FEE REPORT

Under the bill, DEEP's report on a per-person admission to state parks must recommend an admission amount that when combined with, or in lieu of, any required parking fee is comparable to admission and parking fees at state parks in New York and other New England states and results in increased revenue.

When developing the recommendation, DEEP must account for free state park admission and parking for people age 65 and older and disabled veterans. Existing law allows such individuals free access to parks if they are state residents.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

PA 15-106 required DEEP to prepare an RFI on operating concessions, providing services, and offering recreational amenities at state parks. The law directed the commissioner to post the RFI to the

state’s contracting portal and send it to any known private vendors who could provide such concessions, services, and amenities.

The bill requires DEEP, by September 1, 2016, to additionally forward the RFI to statewide business associations, chambers of commerce, and trade associations representing or including members who may be able to operate or offer concessions, services, or amenities at state parks. DEEP must accept any response to the RFI and, by January 1, 2017, provide the Environment Committee with a copy of each response received.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 29 Nay 0 (03/16/2016)