AN ACT CONCERNING THE SELECTION OF CATERERS FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO RENT STATE-OWNED VENUES.

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

Section 1. Section 23-26 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2019):

(a) The commissioner may (1) provide for the collection of fees for parking, admission, boat launching and other uses of state parks, forests, boat launches and other state recreational facilities, (2) establish from time to time the daily and seasonal amount thereof, (3) enter into contractual relations with other persons for the operation of concessions, (4) establish other sources of revenue to be derived from services to the general public using such parks, forests and facilities, (5) employ such assistants as may be necessary for the collection of such revenue. The commissioner shall deposit such revenue derived therefrom with the State Treasurer in the Passport to the Parks account established pursuant to section 23-15h. On and after July 1, 1992, any increase in any fee or any establishment of a new fee under this section shall be by regulations adopted in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54. Not later than May 1, 2010, said commissioner shall establish the daily and seasonal amount of such parking, admission, boat launching and other use fees for residents of this state in amounts not greater than one hundred thirty-five per cent of the amounts charged for such fees by said commissioner as of April 1, 2009. Not later than May 1, 2010, said commissioner shall establish the daily and seasonal amount of such parking, admission, boat launching and other use fees for nonresidents of this state in amounts not greater than one
hundred fifty per cent of the amounts charged for such fees by said
commissioner as of April 1, 2009. Notwithstanding the provisions of
this section, the commissioner may enter into an agreement with any
municipality under which the municipality may retain fees collected
by municipal officers at state boat launches when state employees are
not on duty. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require
any person who rents a venue at a state park or other facility to utilize
the services of any caterer who may otherwise have a contract with the
commissioner to provide catering services at such venue, provided if
the caterer of such person's choice is not approved to otherwise
provide such catering services at such facility, such person may
provide information required by the commissioner for such approval
not later than twelve months prior to the date of such rental for review
and approval by the commissioner.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section,
the commissioner may establish fees for the public use of the mansion
at Harkness Memorial State Park in Waterford, the Ellie Mitchell
Pavilion at Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme and Gillette Castle
State Park in East Haddam provided no fee shall be charged to any
group organized as a nonprofit corporation under 26 USC 501(c)(3) for
purposes of providing support to such parks or facilities and further
provided the commissioner shall specify procedures and criteria for
the selection of any private business which is engaged by the state to
provide services during any such public use, including, but not limited
to, catering services. Such fees, procedures and criteria shall be
effective until June 30, 1999, or until regulations are adopted,
whichever is sooner. Regulations implementing such fees, procedures
and criteria shall be adopted in accordance with the provisions of
chapter 54 on or before July 1, 1999. Such fees shall be comparable with
rents and charges of similar properties based on fair market rates.
Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require any person
who rents a venue at a state park or other facility to utilize the services
of any caterer who may otherwise have a contract with the
commissioner to provide catering services at such venue, provided if
the caterer of such person's choice is not approved to otherwise
provide such catering services at such facility, such person may
provide information required by the commissioner for such approval
not later than twelve months prior to the date of such rental for review
and approval by the commissioner.

(c) The commissioner shall issue to any nonresident of the state,
upon payment of a fee established by said commissioner, a
nontransferable Connecticut private passenger motor vehicle pass
which permits free parking throughout the calendar year at any state
park, forest, boat launch or other state recreational facility, provided
the commissioner shall not be required to issue such a pass to any
park, forest or facility which is wholly managed by a private
concessionaire and may require payment of fees for special events. Not
later than May 1, 2010, said commissioner shall establish the amount of
such fee for nonresidents of this state in an amount not greater than
one hundred fifty per cent of the amount charged for such fee by said
commissioner as of April 1, 2009.

(d) The commissioner shall issue to any resident of the state who is
sixty-five years of age or older and to any resident of this state who is a
disabled veteran, as defined in section 14-254, or under federal law,
without fee, upon application of such resident, a nontransferable
lifetime pass which shall permit free admission and boat access
parking for use at any state park, forest or state recreational facility,
provided the commissioner shall not be required to issue such a pass
for use of any park, forest or facility which is wholly managed by a
private concessionaire and may require payment of fees for special
events.

(e) Notwithstanding any provision of this section, any person with a
valid Connecticut motor vehicle license plate shall not pay a parking
fee at any state park, forest or other state recreational facility on and
after January 1, 2018.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following
sections:
| Section 1 | October 1, 2019 | 23-26 |