

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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HB-5216

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFETY CAPACITY AT GARDNER
LAKE STATE PARK.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 25 \$	FY 26 \$
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	GF - Potential Cost	356,000	13,000
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Potential Cost	5,000	5,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in a potential cost to the state of approximately \$361,000 in FY 25 and \$18,000 annually thereafter associated with managing pedestrian entry to Gardner State Park.

The bill allows the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to close the park to all new entrants once capacity is reached. Currently, when the park is at capacity, DEEP prevents additional vehicles from entering but lacks sufficient resources and tools to prevent further pedestrian entries.

If DEEP chooses to manage pedestrian entries to the park, the department will incur a one-time cost of approximately \$320,000 in FY

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.25% of payroll in FY 25.

25 to install fencing that allows limited pedestrian access. To monitor and enforce a capacity limit, the department may hire a seasonal Environmental Conservation patrol officer at a total cost of \$41,000 in FY 25, consisting of approximately \$12,000 for wages, \$5,000 for fringe benefits within the Office of the State Comptroller, and \$24,000 in other expenses including a vehicle. The personnel-related expenses would total approximately \$18,000 in FY 26 and annually thereafter.

The bill additionally requires DEEP to develop and post a capacity limit and to coordinate traffic control efforts. These aspects of the bill have no fiscal impact as: (1) they largely codify current practices; and (2) the department has sufficient resources to post a capacity limit sign.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.