

SB 511-FN - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

03/12/2026 1032s

2026 SESSION

26-2107

06/09

SENATE BILL **511-FN**

AN ACT relative to state park fees for state residents.

SPONSORS: Sen. Murphy, Dist 16; Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Sen. Pearl, Dist 17; Sen. Sullivan, Dist 18; Sen. Gannon, Dist 23; Sen. McGough, Dist 11; Sen. Prentiss, Dist 5

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

ANALYSIS

This bill:

I. Requires the commissioner of the department of natural and cultural resources to set state park entry fees for New Hampshire residents at no more than 50 percent of the fees charged to nonresidents.

II. Allows separate fee schedules for specific uses within state parks.

III. Permits discounted or waived rates for veterans and school or student groups.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through.~~]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT relative to state park fees for state residents.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 State Park System; Fees for Park System; Residency. Amend RSA 216-A:3-g, I to read as
2 follows:

3 I. Fees for the use of park areas shall be designed to recover a reasonable portion of budget
4 expenses consistent with the purposes of RSA 216-A:1 and 216-A:3. ***Provided, however, that fees***
5 ***charged to New Hampshire residents to enter state parks collected via a website or by a***
6 ***person stationed within the park shall be no more than 50 percent of the entry fees charged***
7 ***to nonresidents. The commissioner of the department of natural and cultural resources, or***
8 ***his or her designee, may elect to set separate fee schedules for residents and nonresidents***
9 ***for specific uses within any state park, including camping, facility rental, parking, or boat***
10 ***rental, provided that where separate fee schedules are created for any given service or***
11 ***product, residents shall be charged no more than 90 percent of the fee charged to***
12 ***nonresidents. Residency may be indicated by state-issued identification, utility or tax bills,***
13 ***vehicle registrations, student identification, or vehicle license plates. The commissioner,***
14 ***or his or her designee, may also provide discounted or waived rates for veterans, as well as***
15 ***for school or student groups, in recognition of their service or educational purpose.*** The
16 general court does not intend that all park facilities be self-supporting.

17 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect April 1, 2027.

SB 511-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE (AMENDMENT #2026-1032s)

AN ACT relative to state park fee discounts for state residents.

FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding.

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenue	\$0	Indeterminable Under \$100,000	Indeterminable (decrease of \$1.5m to increase of \$2m)	Indeterminable (decrease of \$1.5m to increase of \$2m)
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	State Park Fund			
Expenditures*	\$0	Indeterminable Increase of (\$100,000 to \$500,000)	Indeterminable Increase (\$10,000 to \$100,000)	Indeterminable Increase (\$10,000 to \$100,000)
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	State Park Fund			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

METHODOLOGY:

This bill requires the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to establish state park entry fees for New Hampshire residents at no more than 50 percent of the fees charged to non-residents. The bill also allows the Department to create separate fee schedules for specific uses within state parks, such as camping, facility rental, parking, and boat rentals, and permits discounted or waived rates for veterans and school or student groups.

The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources states this bill would result in an indeterminable impact on State Park Fund revenues and expenditures.

Based on FY 2023 visitation data, the Department estimates that approximately half of all state park visitors are residents and half are non-residents. If the Department reduced the day-use fee for residents by 50 percent, revenue would decrease by approximately \$1.1 million. Conversely, increasing non-resident day-use fees by 100 percent could generate approximately \$2.2 million in additional revenue. However, the Department anticipates that fee changes of this extent would deter visitation by 5 to 20 percent, reducing the expected revenue gain.

The Department also anticipates implementation costs of more than \$100,000 to modify reservation and point-of-sale systems to verify residency and apply differential pricing. Additional costs may occur due to longer entry lines, visitor disputes over residency status, and a multi-year period of fee experimentation needed to stabilize pricing under the new model.

Altogether, the Department estimates an indeterminable change in State Park Fund revenue ranging from a decrease of approximately \$1.5 million to an increase of \$2 million per fiscal year, starting in FY 2028 with an indeterminable increase in State Park Fund expenditures ranging from approximately \$100,000 to \$500,000 annually.

It is assumed because the effective date of this bill is April 1, 2027, only a small impact will be felt in revenues for fee change as it would only impact about one month of fee revenue. However, in order to have the system ready for the fee change the primary expenditure increase will occur in FY 2027 and it is assumed the increase in FY 2028 and FY 2029 will be incorporated into the Department's operating budget.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Natural and Cultural Resources