

Senate Executive Departments and Administration Committee

Ben Mickens 271-1403

HB 1768-FN, exempting honorably discharged New Hampshire veterans from metered parking fees at state parks upon presenting acceptable proof of status and raising the value of individual gifts and donations that may be received by the division of parks and recreation without the approval of the governor or the executive council.

Hearing Date: March 11, 2026

Time Opened: 9:01 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:10 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Pearl, McGough and Reardon

Members of the Committee Absent : Senators Gannon and Altschiller

Bill Analysis: This bill exempts honorably discharged New Hampshire veterans from metered parking fees at state parks upon presenting acceptable proof of status and raises the value of individual gifts and donations that may be received by the division of parks and recreation without the approval of the governor or the executive council.

Sponsors:

Rep. Bridle

Rep. Bordes

Rep. Coker

Rep. Edgar

Rep. McGrath

Who supports the bill: Nicole Bixler (DMAVS), Brent Fraser (DMAVS), Kevim Grady (SVAC), Cory Stone, and Eric Pauer.

Who opposes the bill: Suzanne Derynioski and Tami Lanzillo Zeimetz.

Who is neutral on the bill: No one.

Senator Reardon introduced the bill on behalf of the sponsor.

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Kevin Grady of the State Veterans Advisory Committee

- Mr. Grady stated the bill is a courteous act the State can show its veteran population.

- Mr. Grady explained that there was concern in the House over costs and impact on revenue for the park systems. This is what led to the House amendment.
- He stated that the increased dollar amount allotted in the donation process would mean a more streamlined procedure and more revenue generation. He added that this would create a smaller fiscal note for the bill.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None.

Neutral Information Presented:

Darienne Messer, Deputy Supervisor of Park Operation for NH State Parks

- Ms. Messer explained that the bill refers to exclusion from metered parking in certain state parks that do not have metered parking. She added that this could cause confusion on how to enforce the bill in those areas, although it seems to mean that veterans would be exempted should metered parking be instituted there.

Senator Pearl asked how parking is enforced in parks without metered parking.

Ms. Messer responded the rate is 15 dollars per vehicle per day.

Senator Reardon asked if the solution could be including a veteran's section on the website to address this issue.

Ms. Messer responded that this is a possible solution but wouldn't necessarily be as simple as the online senior discount since this legislation specifies the parks.

Senator Reardon asked if these spots reserved online fill up quickly.

Ms. Messer responded that this is the case.

Senator Pearl clarified that the concern was around how to enforce this at the parks listed which do not have metered parking.

Ms. Messer confirmed.

Senator Pearl asked if online reservation counted as metered parking.

Ms. Messer stated that she held that to be distinct from metered parking.

Senator Reardon asked about handicap placard parking.

Ms. Messer stated that this was free parking in any parking area by statute.

Senator Pearl asked for any suggestions on resolving these issues.

Ms. Messer stated that the bill could either be changed to increase the scope or leave it as written regarding metered parking.

Senator Pearl asked for clarification that the department interprets the bill as written to only include metered parking.

Ms. Messer responded that this is their interpretation of HB 1768-FN, and also that it would apply to any metered parking added to the parks which are listed but do not currently have metered parking.

BM
Date Hearing Report completed: March 13, 2026