



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT of RESOURCES and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION of PARKS and RECREATION

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The Honorable Nancy Stiles, Chairman
and Senate Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 103
Concord, NH 03301

February 2, 2016

Re: SB 510-FN, an act relative to parking at state park parking meters.

Dear Chairman Stiles and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Division of Parks and Recreation, Department of Resources and Economic Development, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding Senate Bill 510-FN that would allow the State Park License Plate to be used at the state-owned parking facilities at metered parking at the seacoast.

The State Park License Plate was enacted by the General Court in 2010 under RSA 261:75-c "for the purpose of benefitting the state park system." The park plate provides access to day use areas, but not parking meters. The intent of this bill is to allow for use of the plate at metered Hampton Beach parking facilities during the off season. This is a suggestion that came out of the meetings that the Division of Parks holds in Hampton to receive feedback from the seacoast communities. In addition, the legislation was reviewed and supported by the State Parks System Advisory Council (RSA 216-A:3-k).

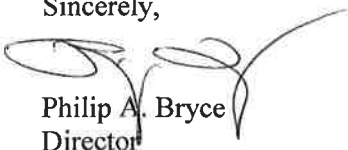
We offer support for the amended bill that provides clarity and corrects the application of off season dates when the State Park Plate could be used. The current language does not meet the intent of the bill and would have a significant negative impact on revenue. We have prepared a fiscal note for the amended language and have determined that we would see an increase in plate sales and little or no impact on metered parking revenue because, unlike the summer season, the parking lots are seldom full during the off season dates prescribed in the amended bill.

The increase in State Park Plate purchases would support the operation of the entire park system. In addition, this legislation would allow us to increase the fees at the meters during holidays and weekends. This is consistent with our statutory direction under RSA 216-A:3-g that provides the agency with "the ability to maximize revenues and to adjust fees according to market conditions and trends as is the common practice in private industry" with the approval of the Joint Fiscal Committee.

We would appreciate your support for SB 510-FN as amended. It will provide a strategic way to provide State Park Plate owners with an additional benefit to increase sales and generate additional revenue to the state park system through those sales and any increase in meter fees on weekends and holidays.

I am available to answer any questions you may have on this bill and provide any additional information you might need. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Philip A. Bryce
Director

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C: Jeffrey J. Rose, Commissioner