



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT

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This fiscal impact statement is produced in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws and House and Senate rules. The focus of the analysis is on governmental expenditure and revenue impacts and may not provide a comprehensive summary of the legislation.

Bill Number: H. 3340 Introduced on January 14, 2025
Subject: Campsite Rental Fee Discount
Requestor: House Medical, Military, Public, and Municipal Affairs
RFA Analyst(s): Daigle
Impact Date: February 7, 2025

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill expands the discount eligibility for state park facilities and campsite facilities to include South Carolina residents who are members or retirees of the Armed Forces of the United States, members of the reserves, and veterans.

The Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (PRT) anticipates this bill will increase expenses by up to approximately \$500,000 beginning in FY 2025-26 for additional staff, supplies, and equipment. PRT anticipates this bill will increase park visitation, and to manage the expected increases in visitation, maintenance, repair, and cleanup, anticipates increased expenses of up to \$350,000 for salary and fringe for 15.0 additional part-time staff members and \$150,000 for equipment and supplies. They expect any increase in expenses will be offset by an increase in fees. The department anticipates requesting an Other Funds authorization increase to expend these additional funds.

Additionally, this bill will have an impact to Other Fund revenue. PRT estimates that this bill will reduce current fee revenue by approximately \$660,000 beginning in FY 2025-26 for individuals who are currently going to parks that will be eligible for the new discount. Additionally, PRT anticipates an 8 percent increase in visits to the park by SC residents who qualify for the new discounts. Based on this and assuming these visits do not replace those visiting at full price, RFA estimates new revenue generated from increased visitation at the current rates with the proposed discounts will be up to \$1,066,000, which results in a net revenue increase of approximately \$400,000. However, the number of discounted visits and stays that will replace those from visitors who would otherwise pay full price is unknown. Additionally, PRT anticipates potentially increasing fees to access park and recreational facilities to offset the increased expenses as needed, which would result in an additional increase to Other Fund revenue. Therefore, the total impact on Other Funds may vary from these estimates and is undetermined.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on January 14, 2025

State Expenditure

This bill extends discount eligibility for state park facilities and campsite facilities to South Carolina residents who are members or retirees of the Armed Forces of the United States, members of the reserves, and veterans.

Currently, any South Carolina resident who is over sixty-five years old, blind, or disabled and members of the South Carolina National Guard may use any facility of a state park except campsite facilities, overnight lodging, and recreation buildings without charge. Such residents may also use campsite facilities at one-half of the prescribed fee. PRT adjusts the fee structure in order to maintain fiscal soundness and continued maintenance and operations of the State Park System. Discounts cannot be less than 35 percent for people eligible for discounts.

PRT anticipates this bill will increase expenses by up to \$500,000 beginning in FY 2025-26 for additional staff, maintenance, and supplies. PRT estimates that this bill will increase park visitation by SC residents by approximately 8 percent, which will require additional staff to manage increased visitation and associated maintenance, repair, and cleanup. Furthermore, additional staff will be assigned to gate and reservation roles as the department is responsible for ensuring that a person utilizing a discount is actually the person occupying the reservation. PRT anticipates an increase in expenses of approximately \$350,000 for salary and fringe for 15.0 additional part-time staff. PRT reports that it currently has 619 part-time employees to handle approximately 9,939,000 visitors, and therefore, to handle an 8 percent increase of SC resident visitors, PRT expects to increase part-time staff by 2.4 percent. Additionally, PRT states that the increase in duties due to this bill will increase hours of existing temporary workers. The department notes that the type of part-time positions will depend on each respective park's needs and may include administrative assistants, assistant rangers, park technicians, and maintenance staff. Additionally, PRT anticipates supply costs will increase by at least \$150,000 for updating printed materials, equipment for new employees, and an upgrade to the current Central Reservation System (CRS). PRT also expressed concern that the department is near the beginning of a 7-year CRS contract, and this bill may require upgrades to the system that could increase expenses by several hundred thousand dollars. PRT anticipates potentially increasing current fees to offset any increase in expenses above revenues due to this bill. The department will need to seek an Other Funds authorization increase in order to expend the additional revenue.

State Revenue

This bill extends discount eligibility for state park facilities and campsite facilities. PRT expects that discounts in this bill will be similar to the discounts currently offered to SC residents over the age of sixty-five including a 35 percent discount for camping, a 40 percent discount for daily admissions, and a 50 percent discount on annual passes. Fee revenue from admissions to parks and recreational facilities is used for park and recreational operations.

PRT anticipates that this bill will reduce existing revenue by approximately \$660,000 beginning in FY 2025-26 due to the discounts for current park attendees. The following table displays PRT’s calculations.

	Camping	Admissions Annual Pass	Admissions Gate
FY 2023-24 Total Revenue	\$23,263,000	\$4,524,000	\$6,785,000
Percent of Revenue from SC Population	60%	80%	60%
Revenue Generated by SC Residents	\$3,958,000	\$3,619,000	\$4,071,000
Percent Newly Eligible for Discount	8%	8%	8%
Revenue Newly Eligible for Discount	\$1,117,000	\$290,000	\$326,000
Discount rate	35%	50%	40%
Revenue Decrease (Estimated)	\$391,000	\$145,000	\$130,000

Source: Estimates by SC Parks Recreation and Tourism

Furthermore, PRT anticipates that this bill may also increase overall visitation by approximately 8 percent. Using the same discount rates provided by PRT, RFA estimates that an 8 percent increase in visits by individuals eligible for the discounts allowed by this bill will result in an additional \$1,732,000 annually at the current fee schedule before the discounts. Based on the 8 percent increase in eligible visitors, the new revenue will also be discounted by a corresponding \$660,000, for a net of \$1,066,000. Using the estimated new net revenue of \$1,066,000 and subtracting \$660,000 in discounts for existing park attendees, this bill may result in a net revenue increase of up to \$400,000 beginning in FY 2025-26. However, PRT reports that the increased number of discounted visits and stays that will replace those from visitors who would otherwise be paying full price is unknown. Additionally, PRT anticipates potentially increasing fees to access park and recreational facilities to offset the increased expenses as needed, which would result in an additional increase to Other Fund revenue. The total impact will depend upon the increase in expenses and PRT’s increased fees, and therefore, the total impact on Other Funds is undetermined.

For reference, based on 2023 population and demographic data from the Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Defense, this bill will expand the discount-eligible population by approximately 20 percent. Those currently eligible for a discount include people who are disabled, blind, over the age of sixty-five, and SC members of the National Guard. This bill will expand eligibility to include South Carolinians who are members or retirees of the Armed Forces, members of the reserves, and all veterans. In 2023 the total population in SC was approximately 5,374,000. The population of people who were eligible for the current discounts was estimated at approximately 1,424,000 (26 percent of the total population), while the total population of people who would be eligible to the discounts pursuant to this bill was estimated at

approximately 1,709,000 (32 percent of the total population). Therefore, approximately 20 percent more people will be eligible for discounts as a result of this bill. ¹

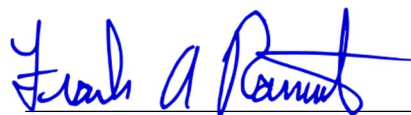
Local Expenditure

N/A

Local Revenue

N/A

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, *Selected Social Characteristics in the United States, American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP02, 2023*, Accessed on January 28, 2025, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP1Y2023.DP02?q=DP02&g=040XX00US45>;
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