

2015 -- H 5509

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Introduced By: Representatives Price, Abney, Barros, Casey, and Costa

Date Introduced: February 12, 2015

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-17.1-9.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-17.1 entitled
2 "Department of Environmental Management" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-17.1-9.1. User fees at state beaches, parks, and recreation areas.** -- (a) The
4 department of environmental management in pursuance of its administrative duties and
5 responsibilities may charge a user fee for any state beach, or recreational area under its
6 jurisdiction, and fees for the use of its services or facilities.

7 (b) The fee may be on a daily or annual basis, or both, and may be based on vehicle
8 parking or other appropriate means. The fees may recognize the contribution of Rhode Island
9 taxpayers to support the facilities in relation to other users of the state's facilities. The fee
10 structure may acknowledge the need to provide for all people, regardless of circumstances.

11 (c) An additional fee for camping and other special uses may be charged where
12 appropriate. Rates so charged should be comparable to equivalent commercial facilities.

13 (d) All such fees shall be established after a public hearing.

14 (e) All daily fees from beach parking, which shall also include fees charged and
15 collected at Ninigret conservation area and Charlestown breachway, shall be shared with the
16 municipality in which the facility is located on the basis of eighty-four percent (84%) retained by
17 the state and sixteen percent (16%) remitted to the municipality.

18 (f) Fifty percent (50%) of all user and concession fees received by the state shall be

1 deposited as general revenues. For the year beginning July 1, 1979, the proportion of user and
2 concession fees to be received by the state shall be sixty-five percent (65%); for the year
3 beginning July 1, 1980, eighty-five percent (85%); and for the year beginning July 1, 1981, and
4 all years thereafter, one hundred percent (100%). The general revenue monies appropriated are
5 hereby specifically dedicated to meeting the costs of development, renovation of, and acquisition
6 of state-owned recreation areas and for regular maintenance, repair and operation of state owned
7 recreation areas. Purchases of vehicles and equipment and repairs to facilities shall not exceed
8 four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) annually. Notwithstanding the provisions of § 37-1-1 or
9 any other provision of the general laws, the director of the department of environmental
10 management is hereby authorized to accept any grant, devise, bequest, donation, gift, or
11 assignment of money, bonds, or other valuable securities for deposit in the same manner as
12 provided above for user and concession fees retained by the state.

13 (g) No fee shall be charged to any school or other nonprofit organization provided that a
14 representative of the school or other organization gives written notice of the date and time of their
15 arrival to the facility.

16 (h) No fee shall be charged to any purple heart veteran recipient or any honorably
17 discharged veteran who has engaged in active combat and for fighting in any war or armed
18 conflict. The provisions of this subsection shall also apply to any beaches, parks, and recreational
19 areas subject to the provisions of chapter 1 of title 32.

20 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

1 This act would exempt purple heart recipients and honorably discharged veterans who
2 were engaged in active combat or fighting in any war or armed conflict from paying user fees at
3 any state beaches, parks, and recreational areas.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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