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IS 6/5/08

P.L. 2007, CHAPTER 275, *approved January 13, 2008*
Senate, No. 2098

1 **AN ACT** concerning admission of veterans to State parks and forests
2 and use of State park and forest facilities by veterans'
3 organizations, and supplementing P.L.1983, c.324 (C.13:1L-1 et
4 seq.).

5
6 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
7 *of New Jersey:*

8
9 1. a. The department shall not charge an admission fee for
10 entrance into a State park or forest by any veteran during an event
11 held by a veterans' organization. In addition, the department shall
12 not charge a facilities fee of any kind to any veterans' organization
13 using a State park or forest for an event.

14 b. As used in this section:

15 "Veteran" means any resident of the State who has been
16 honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances
17 from active service in any branch of the armed forces of the United
18 States, or any honorably discharged member of the American
19 Merchant Marine who served during World War II and is declared
20 by the United States Department of Defense to be eligible for
21 federal veterans' benefits; and

22 "Veterans' organization" means the American Legion, Veterans
23 of Foreign Wars, or other veterans' organizations chartered under
24 federal law, or any service foundation of such an organization
25 recognized in its bylaws.

26
27 2. This act shall take effect immediately.
28
29

30 **STATEMENT**

31
32 This bill would provide free admission for veterans to State
33 parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization,
34 and prohibit the charging facilities fees of any kind for the use of
35 State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.
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37

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39
40 Provides free admission for veterans to State parks and forests
41 during events held by veterans' organizations and free use of park
42 and forest facilities for events held by veterans' organizations.

SENATE, No. 2098

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

212th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 26, 2006

Sponsored by:

Senator ROBERT E. LITTELL

District 24 (Sussex, Hunterdon and Morris)

Senator JOSEPH A. PALAIA

District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblywoman ALISON LITTELL MCHOSE

District 24 (Sussex, Hunterdon and Morris)

Assemblyman JACK CONNERS

District 7 (Burlington and Camden)

Assemblyman JEFF VAN DREW

District 1 (Cape May, Atlantic and Cumberland)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Senators Bucco, Allen, Cardinale, Inverso, Karcher, Sarlo, Turner,
Assemblyman Baroni and Assemblywoman Lampitt**

SYNOPSIS

Provides free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by veterans' organizations and free use of park and forest facilities for events held by veterans' organizations.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/8/2008)

1 AN ACT concerning admission of veterans to State parks and forests
2 and use of State park and forest facilities by veterans'
3 organizations, and supplementing P.L.1983, c.324 (C.13:1L-1 et
4 seq.).

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16 honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances
17 from active service in any branch of the armed forces of the United
18 States, or any honorably discharged member of the American
19 Merchant Marine who served during World War II and is declared
20 by the United States Department of Defense to be eligible for
21 federal veterans' benefits; and

22 "Veterans' organization" means the American Legion, Veterans
23 of Foreign Wars, or other veterans' organizations chartered under
24 federal law, or any service foundation of such an organization
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33 parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization,
34 and prohibit the charging facilities fees of any kind for the use of
35 State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2098

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 3, 2008

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 2098.

This bill provides for free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization, and prohibits the charging of facilities fees of any kind for the use of State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.

This bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 3508, as also reported by the committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

While the veteran's free admission policy proposed in the bill may result in an indeterminate potential loss of park fee revenues to the General Fund, was provided by the Department of Environmental Protection that would enable to Office of Legislative Services to estimate the number of people who would qualify for free admissions during veterans' organizations events or the annual number of admissions that would be free of charge.

There are reported to be approximately 530,000 veterans in New Jersey. However, it is likely that over half of the veteran population is age 62 or over or are totally disabled and therefore entitled to free admission at State parks and forests pursuant to current State law. Thus, this bill would affect a lesser number of veterans.

Daily entrance fees charged at the State parks and forests facilities average \$10 per day during the summer season. An illustrative scenario of the potential revenue loss from daily entrance fees based upon 500 free admissions, valued at \$10 per weekend pass, being issued for two weekend days per year, would result in a potential revenue loss of approximately \$10,000.

SENATE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2098

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 29, 2007

The Senate Environment Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2098.

Senate Bill No. 2098 would provide free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization, and prohibit the charging of facilities fees of any kind for the use of State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2098

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 18, 2007

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably the Senate Bill No. 2098.

Senate Bill No. 2098 provides for free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization, and prohibit the charging of facilities fees of any kind for the use of State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.

FISCAL IMPACT:

While the veteran's free admission policy proposed in the bill may result in an indeterminate potential loss of park fee revenues to the General Fund, no data has been provided by the Department of Environmental Protection that would enable to Office of Legislative Services to estimate the number of people who would qualify for free admissions during veterans' organizations events and the number of admissions that on an annual basis that would be free of charge.

There are reported to be approximately 530,000 veterans in New Jersey. However, it is likely that over half of the veteran population is age 62 or over or are totally disabled and therefore entitled to free admission at State parks and forests pursuant to current State law. Thus, this bill would affect some lesser number of veterans.

Daily entrance fees charged at the State parks and forests facilities average \$10 per day during the summer season. An illustrative scenario of the potential revenue loss from daily entrance fees based upon 500 free admissions, valued at \$10 per weekend pass, being issued for two weekend days per year, would result in a potential revenue loss of \$10,000.

FISCAL NOTE
SENATE, No. 2098
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
212th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JULY 9, 2007

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Provides free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by veterans' organizations and free use of park and forest facilities for events held by veterans' organizations.
- Type of Impact:** Loss of potential revenue to the General Fund.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs..

Executive Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
State Revenue	Loss of Potential Revenue - See Comments Below		

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) **concurs** with the Executive estimate.
- The bill provides free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization, and prohibit the charging facilities fees of any kind for the use of State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.
- The OLS also estimates that potential revenues from State parks admission and facility use fees may be lost to the General Fund, although it is questionable whether such fees would be generated at all if the events described under the bill were not given the fee waiver.

BILL DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill No. 2098 of 2006 would provide free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization, and prohibit the charging facilities fees of any kind for the use of State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs (DMVA) states that the bill will have no direct fiscal impact on its budget. It also states that it cannot estimate the number of veterans that may receive free admission to a State park due to an event run by a veterans organization. Further, the department is not able to ascertain the number of events these organizations may choose to conduct at State parks in any given year.

The Department of Environmental Protection did not respond to the request for fiscal note information on the bill.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concurs with the DMVA. It also estimates that the bill may result in potential revenue loss from State parks admission and facility use fees to the General Fund, although it is questionable whether such fees would be generated at all if the events described under the bill were not given the fee waiver provided therein.

Section: Environment, Agriculture, Energy and Natural Resources

*Analyst: Richard M. Handelman
Senior Fiscal Analyst*

*Approved: David J. Rosen
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This fiscal note has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67.

ASSEMBLY, No. 3508

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 212th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 19, 2006

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ALISON LITTELL MCHOSE

District 24 (Sussex, Hunterdon and Morris)

Assemblyman JACK CONNERS

District 7 (Burlington and Camden)

Assemblyman JEFF VAN DREW

District 1 (Cape May, Atlantic and Cumberland)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Baroni and Assemblywoman Lampitt

SYNOPSIS

Provides free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by veterans' organizations and free use of park and forest facilities for events held by veterans' organizations.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/8/2008)

1 AN ACT concerning admission of veterans to State parks and forests
2 and use of State park and forest facilities by veterans'
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11 held by a veterans' organization. In addition, the department shall
12 not charge a facilities fee of any kind to any veterans' organization
13 using a State park or forest for an event.

14 b. As used in this section:

15 "Veteran" means any resident of the State who has been
16 honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances
17 from active service in any branch of the armed forces of the United
18 States, or any honorably discharged member of the American
19 Merchant Marine who served during World War II and is declared
20 by the United States Department of Defense to be eligible for
21 federal veterans' benefits; and

22 "Veterans' organization" means the American Legion, Veterans
23 of Foreign Wars, or other veterans' organizations chartered under
24 federal law, or any service foundation of such an organization
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35 State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 3508

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 3, 2008

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 3508.

This bill provides free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization, and prohibits the charging of facilities fees of any kind for the use of State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.

This bill is identical to Senate Bill No. 2098, as also reported by the committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

While the veteran's free admission policy proposed in the bill may result in an indeterminate potential loss of park fee revenues to the General Fund, no data was provided by the Department of Environmental Protection that would enable the Office of Legislative Services to estimate the number of people who would qualify for free admissions during veterans' organizations events or the annual number of admissions that would be free of charge.

There are reported to be approximately 530,000 veterans in New Jersey. However, it is likely that over half of the veteran population is age 62 or over or are totally disabled and therefore entitled to free admission at State parks and forests pursuant to current State law. Thus, this bill would affect a lesser number of veterans.

Daily entrance fees charged at the State parks and forests facilities average \$10 per day during the summer season. An illustrative scenario of the potential revenue loss from daily entrance fees based upon 500 free admissions, valued at \$10 per weekend pass, being issued for two weekend days per year, would result in a potential revenue loss of approximately \$10,000.

FISCAL NOTE
ASSEMBLY, No. 3508
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
212th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JULY 9, 2007

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Provides free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by veterans' organizations and free use of park and forest facilities for events held by veterans' organizations.
- Type of Impact:** Loss of potential revenue to the General Fund.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs..

Executive Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
State Revenue	Loss of Potential Revenue - See Comments Below.		

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) **concurs** with the Executive estimate.
- The bill provides free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization, and prohibit the charging facilities fees of any kind for the use of State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.
- The OLS also estimates that potential revenues from State parks admission and facility use fees may be lost to the General Fund, although it is questionable whether such fees would be generated at all if the events described under the bill were not given the fee waiver.

BILL DESCRIPTION

Assembly Bill No. 3508 of 2006 would provide free admission for veterans to State parks and forests during events held by a veterans' organization, and prohibit the charging facilities fees of any kind for the use of State parks or forests by a veterans' organization for an event.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs (DMVA) states that the bill will have no direct fiscal impact on its budget. It also states that it cannot estimate the number of veterans that may receive free admission to a State park due to an event run by a veterans organization. Further, the department is not able to ascertain the number of events these organizations may choose to conduct at State parks in any given year.

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OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concurs with the DMVA. It also estimates that the bill may result in potential revenue loss from State parks admission and facility use fees to the General Fund, although it is questionable whether such fees would be generated at all if the events described under the bill were not given the fee waiver provided therein.

Section: Environment, Agriculture, Energy and Natural Resources

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