

Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: SB571

Patron: Sturtevant

Bill Title: Department of Conservation and Recreation; Disabled Veterans Family Passport; free entry into state parks and discounted services.

Bill Summary: Directs the Department of Conservation and Recreation to establish a Disabled Veteran's Family Passport that entitles the bearer to enter state parks in the Commonwealth without the payment of a parking or admission fee. The bill provides that the Passport will be issued upon request to any immediate family member, as defined in the bill, of a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States who provides certain documentation to the Department. The bill authorizes the Department to require passport holders to re-certify such documentation no more than once every five years.

Budget Amendment Necessary: No.

Items Impacted: N/A.

Explanation: This bill involves the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); however, no budget amendment is required to implement the provisions.

Fiscal Summary: It is anticipated that this bill will reduce nongeneral fund revenue collected by DCR for state parks; the impact is indeterminate.

Fiscal Analysis: This impact statement is preliminary. This bill establishes a Disabled Veteran's Family Passport that provides free entry to any immediate family member of a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States who provides documentation of 100 percent service-connected disability as well as a familial relation. Additionally, the bill would provide free entry to any family member of a deceased veteran whose death was a result of a service-connected disability.

Based on data from Virginia's Office of Veterans and Defense Affairs, an estimated 77,400 fully disabled veterans reside in the Commonwealth. According to the Armed Forces Benefits Association, the average military member has 1.4 immediate family members. Applying this ratio, Virginia's population of 100 percent service-connected disabled veterans is associated with approximately 108,360 family members. Although Virginia-specific data on surviving family members of veterans who died from service-connected conditions is not available, a proportional population method can be applied to recipients of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). Of the more than 400,000 DIC-eligible family members nationwide, approximately 17,200 are likely to reside in Virginia based on population share.

In total, the 202,960 family members identified represent roughly 2.3 percent of Virginia's population. Assuming that the proportion of state park visitors mirrors this group's share of the general population, the agency estimates that providing free admission and parking to only Virginia-resident family members covered by the bill may reduce state park revenue by approximately \$146,682 in FY2027 and increasing to 158,773 by FY2031.

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According to DCR, additional part-time staffing to support the current state park pass processing unit may be needed to implement this bill. The fiscal impact associated with eligible family members visiting from other states cannot be determined with available data. These impacts only represent Virginia family members.

Other: None.