



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Secretary
David Goshorn, Deputy Secretary

January 27, 2026

BILL NUMBER: SENATE BILL – 21 – FIRST READER

SHORT TITLE: NATURAL RESOURCES – STATE PARKS – MARYLAND GOLDEN AGE PASS

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The Department supports enhanced access to parks and green spaces for senior citizens. The Golden Age Pass entitlements within this bill are already standard practice within the Maryland Park Service and this bill would serve to codify them. While the department supports the goal of this legislation, it should be noted that it will also reduce the autonomy of the Maryland Park Service to adjust the Golden Age Pass program to meet evolving needs and circumstances in the future.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Currently, any resident 62 years or older may acquire a Golden Age Pass from the Maryland Park Service for a small processing fee. Pass holders may camp overnight in any State Park at one-half of the established fee Sunday through Thursday, excluding holidays. The pass also permits free day-use entry and boat launching at any State Park that charges a fee. When the fee in effect is “per vehicle”, everyone in the vehicle with the pass holder is admitted for free.

Several State Parks use automatic gates that will require Golden Age Pass holders to also have a supplementary magnetic swipe card to enter these locations (free of charge). They are obtained by reaching out to the specific parks to get the pass. These parks currently include Bohemia River, Point Lookout, St. Mary’s River, Rosaryville, and Sandy Point State Parks. Greenbrier State Park will also be implementing an automated gate in the near future.

BILL EXPLANATION

This bill establishes that Golden Age Pass holders are entitled to free day-use entry at certain State Parks and authorizes launching a boat at any State Park without paying a boat launch fee. It also establishes that free day-use entry applies to everyone in the vehicle with a Golden Age Pass holder when the day-use fee is applied per vehicle.

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