

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Joint Resolution 13 (Senator Hogan, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Rules and Executive Nominations

Natural Resources - State Parks and Forests - Preservation and Funding

This joint resolution urges the Governor to direct the Secretary of Natural Resources to take steps to • ensure that Maryland’s State parks and forests are kept accessible to all who want to enjoy them; • maintain and promote existing and beneficial programs that are important to historical, educational, and cultural resources in the State; and • continue to preserve, protect, and fund State parks and forests fairly, consistently, and in perpetuity as a vital public service.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Compliance with this joint resolution would not directly affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is required to promote, administer, and manage every State-owned or leased forest, park, scenic preserve, natural area, parkway, historic monument, and recreation area. DNR is required to administer the Forest or Park Reserve Fund; the stated purpose of that fund is to enable DNR to purchase and manage in the name of the State lands suitable for forest culture, reserves, watershed protection, State parks, scenic preserves, historic monuments, parkways, and State recreational reserves. DNR is also required to administer the Forest and Park

Concession Account; the stated purpose of the account is to finance the maintenance and operation of concession operations and the functions of State forests and parks.

Background: The State Forest and Park Service manages and operates Maryland's State parks, scenic preserves, historic monuments, natural environmental areas, and recreation areas. The mission of the State Forest and Park Service is to manage the natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources to provide the best use for the benefit of the people. An estimated 11.4 million visitors will use the State parks in fiscal 2007. Approximately 199,000 acres are available to the public. The Governor's proposed fiscal 2007 budget includes approximately \$33.6 million in funding for the State Forest and Park Service; this includes approximately \$15.9 million in general funds, \$17.1 million in special funds, \$0.3 million in federal funds, and \$0.3 million in reimbursable funds. The Governor's proposed budget includes 222.75 regular positions and 293.30 contractual positions.

Responsibility for State forests was transferred to the Forestry Service in fiscal 2006. Among other things, the Forestry Service manages 200,000 acres of State forest land for their ecological, economic, and recreational benefits. The Governor's proposed fiscal 2007 budget includes approximately \$11.5 million in funding for the Forestry Service; this includes approximately \$7 million in general funds, \$2.8 million in special funds, \$1.4 million in federal funds, and \$0.3 million in reimbursable funds. The Governor's proposed budget includes 100 regular positions and 25.17 contractual positions.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 17, 2006
ncs/ljm

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