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**Delegate Dana Stein Testimony In Support of HB 788 –  
State and Local Parks - Child Safe Zone Program - Establishment  
(Equitable Access to Safe Parks Act)**

Chairman Barve and Fellow Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

HB 788 is about welcoming children and their families to our State and local parks. It's about reaffirming that our parks are places where we can all retreat from daily stresses and that we will do all we can to ensure that they are safe places.

This is especially important for children. The bill's idea to designate parks as "Child Safe Zones" is meant to convey to children and families that they are welcome.

HB 788 sets up a program within DNR that would fund improvements to state and local parks to improve safety. These improvements include enhanced lighting, landscaping, easier access, and other measures. By amendment, the installation of security and surveillance cameras has been taken out. The main idea is to use the principles of CPTED (Sep-Ted) - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design – to help design public spaces that enhance crime prevention.

Participation by local governments in this program is entirely voluntary.

Today you will hear from a health system that is focusing on violence prevention and intervention and supports this program as a means of helping children and families who have been exposed to violence to heal through a safe experience in nature. You will also hear testimony from an expert in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, and from a community association leader who looks out for the health and safety of his community.

I hope you will give HB 788 a favorable report.