

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

Bill No.

as introduced, Stone.

General Subject: Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Program.

Existing law establishes the Office of Education and the Environment in the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery for the purpose of implementing a statewide environmental education program.

This bill would establish the Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Program in the Department of Parks and Recreation, for purposes of increasing the ability of underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor recreation and educational experiences by awarding grants to education programs that are available to the public and are operated by public entities or nonprofit organizations. The bill would create the Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Fund in the State Treasury and provide that, upon appropriation by the Legislature, moneys in the fund shall be used for awarding grants pursuant to the program. The bill would authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation to accept, and require the director to deposit into



the fund, voluntary private donations made for support of the program. The bill would express the Legislature's intent that the fund be capitalized with moneys from the General Fund and donations.

This bill would require the director to develop program components, including, but not limited to, criteria for awarding grants, and staffing and budget needs. The bill would require the California Environmental Education Interagency Network to serve as an advisor to the director in developing the program components. The bill would require the director to give priority for funding, where feasible, to outdoor environmental education programs with specified attributes. The bill would require the director, by January 1, 2016, to submit to the Legislature a report on the criteria for the awarding of grants and the availability of grant funding.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.



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An act to add Part 6 (commencing with Section 71450) to Division 34 of, and to repeal Section 71455 of, the Public Resources Code, relating to parks and recreation.



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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The California Environmental Education Interagency Network (CEEIN) was established in 1993 as a consortium of environmental educators representing departments, boards, and commissions of the State Department of Education, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Natural Resources Agency, and the Department of Food and Agriculture. The primary goals of CEEIN are to develop a unified response to the environmental education needs of California's educators and local governments, and to assist with statewide educational reform movements.

(b) The Legislature enacted Chapter 663 of the Statutes of 2003, which established the Outdoor Environmental Education Program and required a study on the benefits of outdoor environmental education for at-risk youth and underserved demographic groups. The study found that the science test scores of children who participated in the program were raised by 27 percent, and these children also had improved conflict resolution and problem solving skills, self-esteem, and motivation to learn. This program ended on January 1, 2006.

(c) The Legislature enacted Resolution Chapter 101 of the Statutes of 2006, which recognized the importance of local recreation and park agencies in the effort to reverse negative trends in inactivity, obesity, diabetes, and other health problems among Californians and encouraged the state to use, and partner with, local recreation and park providers to create a healthier state.

SEC. 2. Part 6 (commencing with Section 71450) is added to Division 34 of the Public Resources Code, to read:



PART 6. OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND RECREATION

71450. As used in this part, the following terms have the following meanings:

(a) "Director" means the Director of Parks and Recreation.

(b) "Fund" means the Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Fund established pursuant to Section 71452.

(c) "Nonprofit organization" means a private, nonprofit organization that qualifies for exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code.

(d) "Program" means the Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Program established pursuant to Section 71451.

71451. There is hereby established the Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Program in the Department of Parks and Recreation for purposes of increasing the ability of underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor recreation and educational experiences by awarding grants to education programs that are available to the public and are operated by public entities or nonprofit organizations.

71452. (a) The Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Fund is hereby established in the State Treasury. Moneys in the fund shall, upon appropriation by the Legislature, be used for awarding grants to qualified outdoor environmental education programs pursuant to this part.

(b) It is intended that the fund be capitalized with moneys from the General Fund and from donations accepted by the director pursuant to Section 71456.



(c) The Controller shall transfer from the General Fund to the fund the amount appropriated from the General Fund by the Legislature for each fiscal year for the implementation of the program.

71453. The director shall do both of the following:

(a) Administer the program to ensure that priority is given to underserved populations, including both urban and rural areas and low-income communities where participation in an outdoor environmental education program has been limited.

(b) Develop the components of the program and fund, including, but not limited to, criteria for awarding grants, and staffing and budget needs.

71454. (a) The California Environmental Education Interagency Network shall serve as advisor to the director in developing the program components.

(b) In developing eligibility criteria for awarding grants, the director shall consider the long-term financial sustainability of the program.

(c) In developing the criteria for awarding grants, the director shall give priority for funding, where feasible, to outdoor environmental education programs that have the following attributes:

- (1) Serves primarily at-risk youth and underserved demographic groups.
- (2) Is a partnership between public and private entities.
- (3) Contributes to healthy lifestyles, including sound nutrition and outdoor exercise and recreation.
- (4) Maximizes the number of participants that can be served.
- (5) Commits in-kind resources to the outdoor environmental education program.



(6) Has a curriculum that is aligned to the science content standards for California public schools adopted by the State Board of Education, fosters stewardship of the environment, and includes, when available, curriculum established pursuant to Part 4 (commencing with Section 71300).

(7) Has a curriculum that is aligned to the adopted common core academic content standards and integrates instruction in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

(8) Includes service learning and community outreach components for purposes of building partnerships between participants and local communities.

71455. (a) In compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code, the director shall submit a report to the Legislature on the criteria developed for the awarding of grants pursuant to this part and the availability of grant funding. The director may also suggest in the report further legislative action to improve the implementation of this program. The report shall be submitted to the Legislature on or before January 1, 2016.

(b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.

71456. The director may accept, and shall deposit into the fund, voluntary private donations made for the support of the program.

