

CHAPTER 79

NATURAL RESOURCES

SENATE BILL 11-024

BY SENATOR(S) King K., Aguilar, Bacon, Boyd, Brophy, Cadman, Carroll, Foster, Giron, Grantham, Heath, Hodge, Jahn, Johnston, King S., Kopp, Lambert, Lundberg, Mitchell, Newell, Nicholson, Renfroe, Roberts, Scheffel, Schwartz, Shaffer B., Spence, Steadman, Tochtrop, White, Williams S.;

also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Looper, Acree, Balmer, Barker, Becker, Casso, Conti, Coram, DelGrosso, Duran, Fields, Fischer, Gardner B., Gerou, Hamner, Holbert, Hullinghorst, Kefalas, Kerr A., Kerr J., Labuda, Miklosi, Murray, Nikkel, Pabon, Pace, Priola, Ramirez, Scott, Solano, Sonnenberg, Soper, Stephens, Summers, Swalm, Szabo, Todd, Vaad, Vigil, Waller, Williams A., Wilson, McNulty.

AN ACT

CONCERNING FREE STATE PARKS ADMISSION FOR VETERANS, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, ESTABLISHING FREE ADMISSION ON A SPECIFIED DAY EACH YEAR FOR VETERANS AND FREE STATE PARKS ADMISSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED SERVICES WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAMS WHO HAVE SUSTAINED SEVERE COMBAT-RELATED INJURIES WHILE SERVING IN POST-SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. 33-12-106, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF THE FOLLOWING NEW SUBSECTIONS to read:

33-12-106. Park entrance privileges - identified veterans - wounded warriors - search and rescue organizations conducting training activities - legislative declaration - rules. (2.3) THE BOARD MAY PROMULGATE RULES TO ALLOW FREE ENTRANCE TO ANY STATE PARK OR RECREATION AREA, NOT TO INCLUDE CAMPGROUNDS, YURTS, OR OTHER AMENITIES AND SERVICES OFFERED, FOR VETERANS ON ONE DAY EACH YEAR. THE BOARD MAY DETERMINE BY RULE WHICH DAY VETERANS ARE ALLOWED FREE ENTRANCE TO STATE PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS.

(2.7) (a) (I) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HEREBY FINDS, DETERMINES, AND DECLARES THAT:

(A) SERVICE MEMBERS RETURNING FROM POST-SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS WHO HAVE BEEN INJURED DURING COMBAT FACE A

Capital letters indicate new material added to existing statutes; dashes through words indicate deletions from existing statutes and such material not part of act.

CHALLENGING PERIOD OF REHABILITATION UPON THEIR RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES;

(B) MANY OF THESE SERVICE MEMBERS ARE SO SEVERELY INJURED THAT THEY REQUIRE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MANY YEARS, OR EVEN THE REST OF THEIR LIVES, AS THEY REENTER MAINSTREAM LIFE;

(C) ALTHOUGH THE SCOPE OF CARE PROVIDED BY THE UNITED STATES ARMED SERVICES WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAMS VARIES WITH EACH SERVICE MEMBER, BASED ON THE NEEDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL, THESE SERVICE MEMBERS MAY BE ASSIGNED, UPON RETURN TO COLORADO, TO A MEDICAL TREATMENT FACILITY SUCH AS EVANS ARMY HOSPITAL AT FORT CARSON, COLORADO;

(D) WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAMS ARE DIRECT EFFORTS BY THE UNITED STATES ARMED SERVICES TO CARE FOR SERVICE MEMBERS DURING THEIR LONG TRANSITION FROM COMBAT-RELATED INJURY TO CIVILIAN LIFE AND TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THOSE SERVICE MEMBERS IN RECOVERY, REHABILITATION, AND REINTEGRATION THAT IS WORTHY OF THEIR SERVICE AND SACRIFICE; AND

(E) FOR THOSE WOUNDED WARRIORS WHO SUFFER INJURIES SO SEVERE THAT THEY WILL REQUIRE INTENSE, ONGOING CARE OR ASSISTANCE FOR MANY YEARS OR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES, A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE HEALING PROCESS IS ENABLING AND ENCOURAGING THESE SERVICE MEMBERS TO EXPERIENCE SOME OF THE OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES THEY ENJOYED PRIOR TO THEIR SERVICE-RELATED INJURIES.

(II) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THEREFORE RECOGNIZES THE NEED TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLORADO'S SEVERELY INJURED "WOUNDED WARRIORS" TO ENJOY THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE STATE AS PART OF THEIR REHABILITATIVE CARE. FURTHERMORE, OFFERING FREE ENTRANCE TO STATE PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS TO SUCH RECOVERING SERVICE MEMBERS IS A SMALL, BUT RECOGNIZABLE, ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THEIR SELFLESS SERVICE AND SACRIFICE.

(b) THE BOARD MAY PROMULGATE RULES TO ALLOW FREE ENTRANCE TO ANY STATE PARK OR RECREATION AREA, NOT TO INCLUDE CAMPGROUNDS, YURTS, OR OTHER AMENITIES OR SERVICES OFFERED, FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE UNITED STATES ARMED SERVICES WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAMS WHO ARE RESIDENTS OF, OR STATIONED IN, COLORADO. ANY SUCH RULES MUST ALSO ALLOW FOR FREE ADMISSION OF PERSONS ACCOMPANYING THE WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANT IN THE SAME VEHICLE.

(c) AS USED IN THIS SUBSECTION (2.7), "UNITED STATES ARMED SERVICES WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAMS" MEANS:

- (I) THE ARMY WOUNDED WARRIOR (AW2) PROGRAM;
- (II) THE AIR FORCE WOUNDED WARRIOR (AFW2) PROGRAM;
- (III) THE NAVY SAFE HARBOR PROGRAM;
- (IV) THE COAST GUARD WOUNDED WARRIOR REGIMENT; AND

(V) ANY SUCCESSOR PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY A BRANCH OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED SERVICES TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT FOR SERVICE MEMBERS WHO HAVE BEEN SEVERELY INJURED IN OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS UNDERTAKEN SINCE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.

SECTION 2. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Approved: March 29, 2011