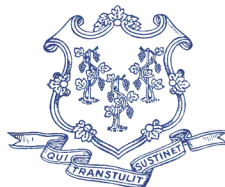


State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 3200
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
TEL. 860-240-0440 FAX 860-240-0023
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March 12, 2018

Robert Klee, Commissioner
Connecticut Department of Energy
and Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Environment Committee Informational Meeting in Regard to the Passport to the Parks Program.

Dear Commissioner Klee:

The Connecticut General Assembly's Committee on the Environment invites Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to speak at an informational meeting in regard to the Passport to the Parks Program. Enclosed with this letter is a list of questions that will be asked by members of the Environment Committee. Additional questions may be asked by committee members.

The Environment Committee has scheduled this informational meeting for Wednesday, March 14th 2018 in Hearing Room 2B of the Legislative Office Building at 10:00 AM.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Environment Committee's clerk, Robin Bumpen, at (860) 240-0431 or at Robin.Bumpen@cga.ct.gov.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ted Kennedy Jr.

Senator Ted Kennedy, Jr., Co-Chair
Environment Committee
12th Senate District

Handwritten signature of Senator Craig Miner.

Senator Craig Miner, Co-Chair
Environment Committee
30th Senate District

Handwritten signature of Mike Demicco.

Representative Mike Demicco, Co-Chair
Environment Committee
21st Assembly District

Enclosures:

Questions for the Environment Committee's Informational Meeting – Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Passport to the Parks Program

**Questions for the Environment Committee's Informational Meeting – Connecticut
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Passport to the Parks Program.**

1. What is the projected annual revenue to be generated by motor vehicle registrations?
2. What is the annual cost of running Connecticut's state park system?
3. How will the revenues be used to support state parks, forests and beaches?
4. How does the state plan to capture out-of-state parking revenue? Does DEEP have a plan for charging out-of-state visitors during the so-called "shoulder" seasons, when the gates to the parks are not currently staffed?
5. What kind of enhanced amenities, such as food service, concessions and recreational activities, are being planned for the parks?
6. Do you expect an increase in park attendance, especially during busy summer weekends? If so, how are you planning for this potential new influx of park attendees? What will happen when parking lots fill up?
7. What arrangements have DEEP made with local law enforcement agencies in anticipation of increased park attendance and traffic? How does DEEP compensate host municipalities for increased EMS calls, garbage collection, traffic, and law enforcement?
8. Passport to the Parks was created as a non-lapsing account, meaning that the fund sits outside of the General Fund budget. Gov. Malloy's proposed revisions for the next fiscal year of the budget include bringing Passport to the Parks back into the budget as an appropriated fund. What thinking is behind this proposed change?
9. In prior sessions, some of our state parks funding proposals have contemplated the establishment of a trust to segregate monies for the maintenance and operation of the parks. What are the agency's thoughts about establishing such a trust?
10. Some Connecticut residents, such as seniors and disabled veterans, have wondered whether they may still be able to access parks free of charge. What is the current DEEP policy on free or reduced passes?
11. Several other states have already established a Passport program based on vehicle registration fees. Have there been any problems with these programs? What has the agency learned from these other states?
12. Other than sustainable financing, what are the most important issues and challenges facing our state parks and forests?