

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 30, 2015

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 1, 2015

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 29, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 988

**Introduced by Assembly Members Mark Stone and Atkins
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Lopez)**

February 26, 2015

An act to amend Section 5095.4 of, and to add Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 5880) to Division 5 of, the Public Resources Code, relating to parks, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 988, as amended, Mark Stone. Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Grants Program.

Existing law authorizes the expenditure of state funds for local assistance grants to cities, counties, and districts for the acquisition and development of various park and recreational areas and facilities. Existing law, the State Urban Parks and Healthy Communities Act, requires the Director of Parks and Recreation, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to develop a competitive grant program to assist state parks, state conservancies in existence as of January 1, 2003, urbanized and heavily urbanized local agencies, and community-based organizations within those jurisdictions, to provide outdoor educational opportunities to children.

This bill would require the Department of Parks and Recreation to establish, on or before March 30, 2016, an Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Grants Program with the purpose of increasing

the ability of underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor recreation and educational experiences by awarding grants to public organizations, nonprofit organizations, or both. The bill would require the director to develop ~~criteria~~ *criteria, procedures, and accountability measures* as may be necessary to implement the program and to administer the program to ensure that priority is given to underserved populations, as specified. The bill would authorize the director to develop an advisory task force to assist in the development of the program and would require the director to give priority funding to outdoor environmental education and recreation programs that have specified attributes.

This bill would authorize the director to accept private donations made for the support of the program and would authorize the director to solicit and accept private funding ~~sources~~ to help ~~supplement~~ *offset* the costs of the program. The bill would provide that, to the extent specified bond funds are available for grants under the program, those funds shall be awarded to programs that meet the criteria of the State Urban Parks and Healthy Communities Act. The bill would require that all moneys received for the purposes of the program be deposited into the California Youth Outdoor Education Account, which would be created by the bill and would be continuously appropriated for purposes of the program, thereby making an appropriation.

This bill would require the department to gather specified information from applicants each award year and to annually report this information, commencing on or before September 1, 2017, to the appropriate budget and fiscal committees of the Legislature.

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

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (1) Park access, outdoor education, and outdoor recreational
- 4 experiences are important to the health and well-being of all
- 5 California citizens as well as the continuing stewardship of our
- 6 natural resources. Many California communities, however, lack
- 7 equitable access to parks and other open-space areas. This lack of
- 8 access to the outdoors contributes to higher incidences of certain
- 9 health ailments, such as diabetes, hypertension, *obesity*, and nature

1 deficit disorder, and other negative social indicators, especially in
2 low-income communities.

3 (2) According to the recent Parks Forward Commission report,
4 *released in February 2015*, improving access to parks, outdoor
5 experiences, and recreational opportunities, particularly for youth
6 and young adults in disadvantaged communities, will lead to more
7 healthy lifestyles, better educational outcomes, and improvements
8 to the overall well-being of ~~California citizens~~, *California's citizens*
9 *and communities, and as well as our natural environment.*

10 (3) ~~The Legislature enacted Chapter 663 of the Statutes of 2003,~~
11 ~~which 2003~~ established the Outdoor Environmental Education
12 Program and required a study on the benefits of outdoor
13 environmental education for at-risk youth and underserved
14 demographic groups. The study found that the science test scores
15 of children who participated in the program were raised by 27
16 percent, and that these children also had improved conflict
17 resolution and problem solving skills, better self-esteem, and were
18 more motivated to learn. The program ended on July 1, 2005.

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

25 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to expand access to parks
26 and other outdoor educational and recreational opportunities in
27 underserved areas by, among other things, convening and
28 developing strategic partnerships to facilitate, promote, and
29 enhance access to parks, as well as outdoor educational and
30 recreational experiences in underserved communities.

31 SEC. 2. Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 5880) is added
32 to Division 5 of the Public Resources Code, to read:

33

34 CHAPTER 14. OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND
35 RECREATION GRANTS PROGRAM

36

37 5880. (a) On or before March 30, 2016, the ~~department~~ *director*
38 shall establish an Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation
39 Grants Program to increase the ability of underserved and at-risk
40 populations to participate in outdoor recreation and educational

1 experiences by awarding grants to public organizations, *including*
2 *local governments and local education agencies*, nonprofit
3 organizations, or both.

4 (b) In developing the *grant* program, the director shall do both
5 of the following:

6 ~~(1) Develop criteria and procedures~~ *criteria, procedures, and*
7 *accountability measures* as may be necessary to implement the
8 grant program.

9 (2) Administer the *grant* program to ensure that priority is given
10 to underserved populations, including both urban and rural areas
11 and low-income communities where participation in ~~an~~ outdoor
12 environmental education and recreation ~~program~~ *programs* has
13 been limited.

14 (c) The director may develop an advisory task force ~~composed~~
15 *comprised* of public, private, nonprofit, academic, and other entities
16 and individuals to assist in the development of the *grant* program,
17 including representatives of the California Environmental
18 Education Interagency Network.

19 (d) The director shall give priority for funding to ~~an~~ outdoor
20 environmental education and recreation ~~program~~ *programs* that
21 primarily ~~serves~~ *provide outreach to and serve* students who are
22 eligible for free or reduced-price meals, foster youth, or pupils of
23 limited English proficiency, as defined in Section 42238.01 of the
24 Education Code, and ~~has at least~~ *have one or more* of the following
25 attributes:

26 ~~(1) Demonstrates~~ *Demonstrate* partnerships between public,
27 private, and nonprofit entities.

28 ~~(2) Contributes~~ *Contribute* to healthy lifestyles, sound nutritional
29 habits, and improved outdoor educational and recreational
30 experiences.

31 ~~(3) Maximizes~~ *Maximize* the number of participants that can be
32 served.

33 ~~(4) Commits~~ *Commit* in-kind resources.

34 ~~(5) Has~~ *Have* a curriculum that is aligned to the science content
35 standards for California public schools adopted by the State Board
36 of Education.

37 ~~(6) Fosters~~ *Foster* stewardship of the environment and ~~includes~~,
38 *include* when available, curriculum established pursuant to Part 4
39 (commencing with Section 71300) of Division 34.

1 (7) ~~Integrates~~*Integrate* instruction in science, technology,
2 engineering, and mathematics.

3 (8) ~~Includes~~*Include* service learning and community outreach
4 components for purposes of building partnerships between
5 participants and local communities.

6 (e) Reverted and unencumbered funds from the California Clean
7 Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection
8 Act of 2002 may be appropriated by the Legislature for the purpose
9 of this chapter, if consistent with the requirements of the California
10 Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal
11 Protection Act of 2002. To the extent that grants may be awarded
12 from those funds, they shall be awarded only to programs that
13 meet all of the criteria specified in Section 5095.4.

14 (f) The director may also accept private donations made for the
15 support of the program. The director may solicit and accept private
16 funding to help ~~supplement~~ *offset* the costs of the program. These
17 funding sources may include, but are not limited to, foundations,
18 corporate funding, crowdfunding resources, donation drives, or
19 any other funding sources that may be available.

20 (g) All moneys received pursuant to subdivisions (e) and (f) for
21 the purpose of this program shall be deposited in the California
22 Youth Outdoor Education Account, which is hereby created within
23 the State Park and Recreation Fund. Notwithstanding Section
24 13340 of the Government Code, moneys in the California Youth
25 Outdoor Education Account shall be continuously appropriated to
26 the department for the purposes of this chapter.

27 (h) (1) *The department shall gather information from applicants*
28 *each award year for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of*
29 *outdoor environmental education and recreation programs in*
30 *achieving the objectives of the grant program. The department*
31 *shall annually summarize and report this information for the*
32 *previous award year, commencing on or before September 1, 2017,*
33 *to the appropriate budget and fiscal committees of the Legislature.*
34 *The information in the annual report shall include the total number*
35 *of children served, the total number and types of entities that*
36 *received grant awards, appropriate recommendations to improve*
37 *the grant program, partnerships formed, educational objectives*
38 *achieved, the total number of applications received, and the total*
39 *number of children who would have been served had all applicants*
40 *for the award year received grant awards.*

1 (2) *A report pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be submitted in*
2 *compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.*

3 SEC. 3. Section 5095.4 of the Public Resources Code is
4 amended to read:

5 5095.4. (a) The director, in consultation with the State
6 Department of Education, shall develop a competitive grant
7 program to assist state parks, state conservancies in existence as
8 of January 1, 2003, urbanized and heavily urbanized local agencies,
9 and community-based organizations within those jurisdictions,
10 working in collaboration, to provide outdoor educational
11 opportunities to children.

12 (1) Applicant entities shall provide a 25-percent matching
13 contribution in community resources. The matching contributions
14 may be in the form of money, including funds from other state or
15 local assistance programs, gifts of real property, equipment, and
16 consumable supplies, volunteer services, free or reduced-cost use
17 of land, facilities, or equipment, and bequests and income from
18 wills, estates, and trusts. The department may establish findings
19 for hardships to waive the matching requirement when an applicant
20 cannot meet the requirement.

21 (2) The department may give additional consideration to
22 applicant entities collaborating with other entities, including, but
23 not limited to, school districts, faith-based groups, and others
24 providing outreach programs to identify and attract urbanized
25 youth most in need of organized, constructive recreational
26 activities.

27 (b) The department shall make one-third of any funds
28 appropriated for the purposes of this chapter available to give
29 special priority to providing increased access for elementary
30 schoolage children in grades 2 to 8, inclusive, to conservancy or
31 state, community, and regional park properties, including public
32 properties within the coastal zone, and, in addition, shall give
33 priority, in awarding a grant pursuant to this section, to all of the
34 following:

35 (1) Programs that use curriculum tied to the science content
36 standards and science framework adopted by the State Board of
37 Education.

38 (2) Applicants that serve children with family incomes below
39 the statewide average, based on the most recent figures computed
40 and established by the Department of Finance.

1 (3) Applicants that provide access to children who are
2 underserved or lack access to parks or other outdoor venues suitable
3 to conduct appropriate environmental education instruction.

4 (4) Applicants that have developed working collaboratives to
5 develop environmental education partnerships.

6 (5) Applicants working in collaboration with local educational
7 agencies to identify those children lacking adequate opportunities
8 to access outdoor environmental education curriculum or
9 innovative or alternative recreation programming.

10 (c) The amount of a grant awarded pursuant to this section may
11 not be less than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) or more than
12 two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000). A grant may be
13 expended for any of the following purposes:

14 (1) Staffing that is directly associated with the programming.

15 (2) Staff training or development directly associated with the
16 programming.

17 (3) Costs associated with transporting youth between a
18 community or school and the proposed environmental education
19 venue.

20 (4) Medical insurance for the participants, only if the insurance
21 is a requirement pursuant to the activity.

22 (5) Operational costs, such as the rental equipment, food, and
23 supplies.

24 (6) Applicants that can demonstrate that the administrative costs
25 associated with this activity will not exceed more than 7.5 percent
26 of the amount of the grant.

27 (d) The department may gather information from the applicants
28 as to the effectiveness of these programs in meeting program
29 objectives. The department shall summarize this information and
30 report to the appropriate budget and fiscal committees of both
31 houses of the Legislature as to the number of children served, the
32 educational objectives met, and the level of demand.

33 (e) Applicant agencies may enter into contracts with other public
34 agencies or entities to provide unique interpretive skills or to
35 present authentic, curriculum-based programs in units of
36 conservancy properties or state, community, or regional park
37 systems for services not otherwise provided. The purpose of this
38 subdivision is to authorize the applicants to provide programming
39 services, equipment, and materials that assist in the curriculum

- 1 program or provide educational activities that assist in the
- 2 presentation of cultural traditions.

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