

STATE SENATOR • RAYMOND E. BASHAM • 8TH DISTRICT

# Basham Press Release

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## **Basham Legislation to Reduce Fees, Increase Funding for State Parks Passes Senate**

*Senate Bills 388 & 389 would reduce the annual state park entrance fee for Michigan residents from \$24 to \$10 through an alternative funding plan*

LANSING, Mich.—Legislation introduced by Senator Ray Basham (D-Taylor) to lower fees and expand funding for Michigan’s state parks, Senate Bill 389, passed the Senate with strong bipartisan support, 25-12. It’s companion legislation introduced by Senator Patty Birkholz (R-Saugatuck), Senate Bill 388, also passed, moving forward with a new plan to fund Michigan’s extensive parks system, the largest system east of the Mississippi.

“Michigan has some of the greatest natural resources in the country, and we are lucky to have a state parks system that allows us so much access to them” said Sen. Basham. “However, funding of our state parks has been in significant decline, and many locations are suffering. This legislation will ensure that more people have an opportunity to support the parks we use and love, and in a more cost-effective way for most park-goers.”

SB 388 and SB 389 will institute an alternative funding plan for Michigan’s state parks through the creation of a new recreation passport that Michigan residents can sign up for whenever they register a vehicle. This proposal was based on the recommendation of the Citizens’ Committee for Michigan State Parks for long-term funding for the state park system, and is modeled after the state park funding system in Montana, which was implemented in 2004 and has enjoyed a 75 percent participation rate.

Senate Bill 388 would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) to layout the distribution of revenue from the proposed recreation passport fee as well as create the “Local Public Recreation Facilities Fund” to provide grants to local units of government for the development of local public recreation facilities. Through this new system, both state and local parks will continue to receive support.

Senate Bill 389 would provide for a state park and state-operated public boating access site recreation passport that a Michigan resident could obtain by paying an additional fee when registering a motor vehicle. The Secretary of State would then transfer the fee revenue to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for park maintenance and recreation resources.

The fee for Michigan residents would be \$5 for motorcycles and \$10 for other vehicles, which is a significant reduction from the current \$24 annual fee. Out-of-state residents would still be required to purchase an annual pass for \$29 or a day pass for \$8.

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