



2015-2016 General Assembly

HOUSE BILL 97: 2015 Appropriations Act, Sec. 14.11: Dynamic Pricing for State Parks and Attractions

Committee:

Introduced by:

Analysis of: Sec. 14.11 of S.L. 2015-241

Date:

Prepared by: Jeff Cherry
Staff Attorney

SUMMARY: *Sec. 14.11 of S.L. 2015-241, as amended by Sec. 5.5 of S.L. 2015-268, makes a variety of changes to the laws governing the charging of admission and other fees by various State attractions managed by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. This section includes the following provisions:*

- *Authorization for the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) to establish admission fees and related activity fees using a dynamic pricing strategy for State historic sites and museums administered by the Department of Cultural Resources prior to the reorganization set forth in this Act. With respect to the North Carolina Zoo, State parks, and the North Carolina Aquariums transferred to DNCR, the Department must issue new rules governing admission and other fees using a dynamic pricing strategy. The provision expressly withholds authorization for DNCR to charge new parking fees at these attractions, or to charge an admission fee at any site or facility not already charging an admission fee.*
- *Authorization for the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) to establish admission fees and related activity fees using a dynamic pricing strategy for State forests. However, the provision expressly withholds authorization for the Department to charge new parking fees at State forests.*
- *Exemption from rulemaking under the procedures set forth in the Administrative Procedures Act for the setting of operating hours, admission fees or activity fees by the Board of Agriculture, with respect to State forests and by DNCR with respect to the North Carolina Zoo, State parks, the North Carolina Aquariums, and the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences (except for a decision to eliminate all public operating hours for those sites and facilities).*
- *A definition of "dynamic pricing," which includes a goal of maximizing revenues from use of these State resources to the extent practicable to offset State appropriations*
- *Prohibition on charging admission fees for school groups visiting the North Carolina Zoo, State parks, or the North Carolina Aquariums.*
- *A report to the General Assembly by the DACS and the DNCR on implementation of the new pricing strategy by March 1, 2016 that also includes an evaluation of charging new entrance or admission fees at attractions where such fees are not already charged.*
- *A report to the General Assembly by the DNCR regarding the possibility of charging admission fees at the North Carolina Museum of History and the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences by April 1, 2016 that also includes the impact on receipts and attendance, the*

Kory Goldsmith
Director



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(919) 733-6660

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costs to implement a new admissions fee, and a comparison with state-supported museums in other states.

This section became effective July 1, 2015, and applies to admission fees or related activity fees charged on or after September 18, 2015.