



101ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2019 and 2020

HB5469

by Rep. Sonya M. Harper

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

20 ILCS 805/805-233 new
30 ILCS 105/5.930 new

Amends the Department of Natural Resources (Conservation) Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois. Provides that the Department shall establish the Outdoor Equity Grants Program, subject to adequate appropriation or private funding, to increase the ability of underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor environmental educational experiences at State parks and other public lands where outdoor environmental education programs take place. Contains provisions relating to the organization of the grant program, priority of specified populations, funding of the grant program, and annual reporting. Provides that the Department shall adopt rules to implement the provisions. Amends the State Finance Act by adding the Outdoor Equity Grants Program Fund.

LRB101 17203 BMS 66605 b

FISCAL NOTE ACT
MAY APPLY

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Department of Natural Resources
5 (Conservation) Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois
6 is amended by adding Section 805-233 as follows:

7 (20 ILCS 805/805-233 new)

8 Sec. 805-233. Outdoor Equity Grants Program.

9 (a) The Department shall establish the Outdoor Equity
10 Grants Program to increase the ability of underserved and
11 at-risk populations to participate in outdoor environmental
12 educational experiences at State parks and other public lands
13 where outdoor environmental education programs take place.
14 Subject to adequate funding under subject (g), the grant
15 program shall award grants to units of local government, State
16 agencies, or nonprofit organizations with a focus on funding
17 transportation, logistical, and program operations and
18 capacity costs associated with reaching historically
19 underserved communities.

20 (b) In developing the grant program, the Department shall:

21 (1) Develop criteria, procedures, and accountability
22 measures as may be necessary to implement the grant
23 program.

1 (2) Administer the grant program to ensure that
2 priority is given to underserved populations, including
3 both urban and rural areas and low-income communities,
4 where participation in outdoor environmental education and
5 recreation programs has been limited.

6 (c) The Department shall give priority for funding to
7 outdoor environmental education programs that primarily
8 provide outreach to and serve pupils who are eligible for free
9 or reduced-price meals, foster youth, or pupils of limited
10 English proficiency and have one or more of the following
11 attributes:

12 (1) Have a curriculum that is aligned to the content
13 standards for public schools adopted by the State Board of
14 Education.

15 (2) Foster stewardship of the environment.

16 (3) Integrate instruction in science, technology,
17 engineering, arts, and mathematics.

18 (d) The Department may include, but are not limited to,
19 outdoor environmental education programs that do any of the
20 following:

21 (1) Maximize the number of participants that can be
22 served.

23 (2) Demonstrate partnerships between public, private,
24 and nonprofit entities.

25 (3) Contribute to healthy lifestyles, sound
26 nutritional habits, and improved outdoor educational and

1 recreational experiences.

2 (4) Include service learning and community outreach
3 components for purposes of building partnerships between
4 participants and local communities.

5 (e) The Department may provide funding for professional
6 learning, based on approved content standards, for the staff
7 and volunteers of those programs given priority pursuant to
8 subsection (c).

9 (f) In implementing the grant program, the Department shall
10 work with relevant stakeholders to promote and implement the
11 grant program in a manner that effectively reaches a wide
12 geography throughout the state and ensures that regions in
13 northern, central, and southern Illinois, including both urban
14 and rural areas, are adequately considered with an emphasis on
15 addressing the transportation needs within these regions.

16 (g) Grants under this Section are subject to appropriation,
17 except that the Department may accept private donations and
18 funding made for the support of the grant program.

19 All private moneys received pursuant to this subsection or
20 appropriated for the purpose of the grant program shall be
21 deposited in the Outdoor Equity Grants Program Fund.

22 Before commencing any program development activities for
23 the grant program, adequate donations or funds shall be
24 deposited into the Outdoor Equity Grants Program Fund. This
25 amount shall be sufficient to administer the grant program and
26 provide grant awards.

1 (h) The Department shall gather information from
2 applicants following each year that grants were awarded for
3 purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of outdoor
4 environmental education programs in achieving the objectives
5 of the grant program. The Department shall annually summarize
6 and report this information for the previous award year to the
7 General Assembly. The information in the annual report shall
8 include the total number of children served, the total number
9 and types of entities that received grant awards, appropriate
10 recommendations to improve the grant program, partnerships
11 formed, educational objectives achieved, the total number of
12 applications received, and the total number of children who
13 would have been served had all applicants for the award year
14 received grant awards.

15 (i) The Department shall adopt rules to implement this
16 Section.

17 Section 10. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
18 Section 5.930 as follows:

19 (30 ILCS 105/5.930 new)

20 Sec. 5.930. The Outdoor Equity Grants Program Fund.