

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL NOTE

SB 262 - HB 972

March 17, 2009

SUMMARY OF BILL: Authorizes persons with a handgun carry permit to carry a handgun in any public park, refuge, hunting area, wildlife management area, or natural forest land in Tennessee. Any federally managed area would be subject to applicable federal restrictions.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

Decrease State Revenue - \$300/Wildlife Resources Fund
Increase State Expenditures - \$38,200/One-Time

Decrease Local Revenue - \$400
Increase Local Expenditures - Exceeds \$50,000/One-Time*

Assumptions:

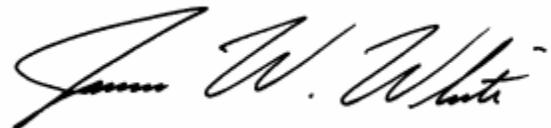
- Current signage in 53 state parks states that firearms are not allowed. The Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) estimates approximately three signs per park, for a total of 159 signs. Some signs state that bringing a firearm into a state park is a misdemeanor subject to fine and imprisonment. Many of the signs contain notice of multiple rules, including the prohibition of firearms. Although the bill does not specify that signs will be modified or replaced, it will be necessary for TDEC to change the signs to comply with this legislation to prevent an inconsistency between the signage and state law.
- TDEC will replace 159 signs at a cost of \$240 each. The total cost of sign replacement will be \$38,160 (159 x \$240 = \$38,160).
- TDEC will use existing personnel to replace the signs. There will be no additional costs for labor.
- Some local governments will have to replace similar signage. It is estimated that the cost to local governments statewide to make such changes exceeds \$50,000 one-time.

- 2007 and 2008 data concerning violations for persons carrying a handgun in wildlife management areas, refuges, and public hunting areas was unavailable.
- In 2006 there were eight violations for handgun possession in wildlife management areas, refuges, and public hunting areas that would be exempt under the provisions of this bill. The total amount fines and court costs collected in association with the eight convictions was \$1,330. In 2005 there were no such convictions.
- An average of four such convictions each year ($8/2 = 4$).
- The average amount of revenue collected each year for such convictions is estimated to be \$665 per year ($\$1,330/2 = \665).
- A split of 55 percent to local government ($\$665 \times 55\% = \365.75) and 45 percent ($\$665 \times 45\% = \299.25) to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) for any fees and fines associated with such convictions.
- No additional personnel will be required by TWRA or TDEC due to any difficulty related to the enforcement of wildlife or environmental regulations.

*Article II, Section 24 of the Tennessee Constitution provides that: *no law of general application shall impose increased expenditure requirements on cities or counties unless the General Assembly shall provide that the state share in the cost.*

CERTIFICATION:

This is to duly certify that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



James W. White, Executive Director

/cce