

REC ACT ISSUE BRIEF

Overview

Officially known as the *Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act of 2016*, the REC Act directs the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) of the Department of Commerce to assess and analyze the outdoor recreation economy of the United States and the effects attributable to it on the overall U.S. economy.

In conducting the assessment, the Bureau may consider employment, sales, contributions to travel and tourism, and other appropriate contributing components of the outdoor recreation economy. ASA is supportive of the legislation.

“We appreciate that the importance of the Outdoor Recreational Economy is finally being recognized. Activities like sportfishing are about the great outdoors, family recreation, and clean fun. It’s about time that the Government realized that outdoor recreation also is just as much about jobs, business and the economy!” Scott Gudes, vice president for Government Affairs at the American Sportfishing Association

Talking Points

- While sometimes considered frivolous, outdoor recreation is actually a massive economic driver.
- The Outdoor Industry Association estimates that outdoor recreation supports 6.1 million jobs and generates over \$646 Billion dollars annually. That’s more jobs and revenue than the pharmaceutical and automotive industry combined.
- While the outdoor industry already tracks their own statistics, government tracking/reporting would bring “third party credibility” and increase both visibility and clout at both the Federal and state levels.
- Outdoor recreation jobs are important to the American economy because many are hard to export.
- Both the U.S. House and Senate versions of the bill have had strong bipartisan support.

Where things stand

The House version, H.R.4665, had 26 sponsors/co-sponsors (13 Democrats and 13 Republicans): Rep. Beyer, Donald S., Jr. [D-VA-8], Rep. Reichert, David G. [R-WA-8], Rep. Welch, Peter [D-VT-At Large], Rep. McMorris Rodgers, Cathy [R-WA-5], Rep. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large], Rep. Simpson, Michael K. [R-ID-2], Rep. Polis, Jared [D-CO-2], Rep. Paulsen, Erik [R-MN-3], Rep.



Costa, Jim [D-CA-16], Rep. Zinke, Ryan K. [R-MT-At Large], Rep. Walorski, Jackie [R-IN-2], Rep. Bonamici, Suzanne [D-OR-1], Rep. Coffman, Mike [R-CO-6], Rep. Takai, Mark [D-HI-1], Rep. Ross, Dennis A. [R-FL-15], Rep. Walz, Timothy J. [D-MN-1], Rep. Knight, Stephen [R-CA-25], Rep. Huffman, Jared [D-CA-2], Rep. Jolly, David [R-FL-13], Rep. Blumenauer, Earl [D-OR-3], Rep. Meehan, Patrick [R-PA-7], Rep. Pocan, Mark [D-WI-2], Rep. Young, Todd C. [R-IN-9], Rep. DelBene, Suzan K. [D-WA-1], Rep. Walberg, Tim [R-MI-7], and Rep. DeFazio, Peter A. [D-OR-4]
It passed with bipartisan support by voice vote 11/14/2016. It was delivered to the Senate the next day.

S.2219, the Senate version, has 16 sponsor/co-sponsors (8 Democrats and 8 Republicans) so it has bipartisan support as well. Sen. Shaheen, Jeanne [D-NH] was the sponsor with Sen. Gardner, Cory [R-CO], Sen. Daines, Steve [R-MT], Sen. Heinrich, Martin [D-NM], Sen. Bennet, Michael F. [D-CO], Sen. Enzi, Michael B. [R-WY], Sen. Tester, Jon [D-MT], Sen. Moran, Jerry [R-KS], Sen. Murray, Patty [D-WA], Sen. Sessions, Jeff [R-AL], Sen. Wyden, Ron [D-OR], Sen. Wicker, Roger F. [R-MS], Sen. Ayotte, Kelly [R-NH], Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN], Sen. Peters, Gary C. [D-MI], and Sen. Risch, James E. [R-ID] cosponsoring.

On Monday, November 28, the Senate passed the House version of the legislation. Since the House version was passed, no conference is needed and the bill was sent to the President for approval.

The President signed the bill on December 8, 2016.

Bill Text

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2219/text>

