

1 A RESOLUTION recognizing that economic development and tourism are
2 interdependent and requesting the Cabinet for Economic Development and the Tourism,
3 Arts and Heritage Cabinet to work together to explore further development of the
4 Kentucky state park system.

5 WHEREAS, the Kentucky state park system was established in 1924 and boasts
6 one of the nation's most extensive networks, including over 45 parks and historic sites, 17
7 resort parks with lodges, and 13 golf courses; and

8 WHEREAS, the Kentucky state park system employs almost 650 full-time
9 employees and hundreds of seasonal staff members; and

10 WHEREAS, in 2016, the General Assembly approved an \$18 million appropriation
11 to improve safety and infrastructure and enhance esthetics at Kentucky state parks as part
12 of the Refreshing the Finest Effort; and

13 WHEREAS, since 2016, the General Assembly has approved over \$400 million for
14 a major overhaul of the state parks to address crucial structural and infrastructure needs,
15 including campground upgrades, utility improvements, and broadband connectivity; and

16 WHEREAS, tourism often acts as a powerful driver for local growth by bringing
17 out-of-state dollars to the Commonwealth, stimulating economic development for local
18 communities; and

19 WHEREAS, the Kentucky state park system offers a sustainable economic
20 development ecosystem for local communities; and

21 WHEREAS, the Cabinet for Economic Development and the Tourism, Arts and
22 Heritage Cabinet have a valuable opportunity given the improvements made to the
23 Kentucky state park system for economic stimulus to our local communities. The
24 cabinets need to work together on issues related to the further development of the
25 Kentucky state park system, specific recommendations for private-public partnerships,
26 detailed financial information regarding return on investment resulting from partnerships,
27 privatization of the parks, the impact of real property issues such as lease obligations and

1 land restrictions, and further infrastructure development;

2 NOW, THEREFORE,

3 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of*
4 *Kentucky:*

5 ➔Section 1. The Senate urges the Cabinet for Economic Development and the
6 Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet to work together to explore new ways the
7 Commonwealth of Kentucky can enhance economic development and tourism within the
8 state park system.

9 ➔Section 2. The Senate requests the Cabinet for Economic Development and the
10 Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet to submit recommendations for private-public
11 partnerships, detailed financial information regarding return on investment resulting from
12 partnerships, privatization of the parks, real property issues such as ownership and land
13 restrictions, and further infrastructure development in person to the Interim Joint
14 Committee on Economic Development and Workforce Investment by November 1, 2026.

15 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
16 Resolution to the Secretary of the Cabinet for Economic Development and the Secretary
17 of the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet.