
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 518 (Ward) - Low-impact camping areas

Version: July 17, 2025

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 29, 2025

Policy Vote: HOUSING 9 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Mark McKenzie

Bill Summary: AB 518 would explicitly exclude a “low-impact camping area,” as defined, from the definition of a special occupancy park (SOP) that is licensed and regulated by the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), if it is located in a county that has enacted an ordinance authorizing low-impact camping.

***** ANALYSIS ADDENDUM – SUSPENSE FILE *****

The following information is revised to reflect amendments
adopted by the committee on August 29, 2025

Fiscal Impact:

- HCD estimates it would incur approximately \$70,000 in one-time contracting costs to modify its administrative systems, and ongoing costs of approximately \$784,000 annually for 4.0 PY in staff time to handle an anticipated increase in requests for technical assistance from local jurisdictions regarding interpretation of the law to determine whether the existing sites and potential new sites are permitted by HCD or are exempt “low-impact camping areas.” HCD also anticipates workload for an increase in Mobilehome Assistance Center complaints, and an increase in requests for health and safety inspections. Staff assumes that requests for technical assistance would likely decline over several years. (General Fund)

Author Amendments:

- Define “camper,” for purposes of the bill, as an individual or individuals all camping under a single low-impact camping area registration or registration.
- Clarify that a low-impact camping area must comply with state and local fee requirements, in addition to tax requirements, as specified.
- Require a county that has opted to allow low-impact camping to alert HCD of its choice to authorize low-impact camping areas.
- Require all state and local eviction processes applicable to an SOP to also apply to low-impact camping areas.

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