



Legislation

There are several state legislative approaches to promote time outdoors, the associated health benefits, and public lands conservation, including:



Grant Programs

State-supported programs can help ensure outdoor access. [Washington](#), [Minnesota \(HF 133\)](#), and [Nevada \(AB 331\)](#) have established No Child Left Inside grant programs that support outdoor access for underserved youth. Meanwhile, [New Mexico \(SB 462\)](#) and [Colorado \(HB 21-1318\)](#) have created Outdoor Equity Fund grant programs to support transformative outdoor experiences for youth.



Outdoor Learning

States are encouraging outdoor learning environments, such as [Oregon SB 439](#) (2015) which provides outdoor school programs for 5th and 6th grade students, and [Washington SB 5151](#) (2021) which fully licensed outdoor preschools following a successful pilot program.



Outdoor Wellness

States can facilitate opportunities for outdoor wellness, therapy, and other health-related programs. In New York, [the Outdoor Rx Act \(AB 8094A\)](#) requires a review of veterans' abilities to access state parks, lands, and facilities. In Washington, the state funded a "Parks Rx Health and Wellness" pilot program to prescribe time outdoors in the [2021 budget](#).



Office of Outdoor Recreation

Designating state offices serves to support the outdoor industry and improve outdoor recreation opportunities. Examples include [Colorado](#) (2015), [Utah SB 73](#) (2013), [Washington SB 5843](#) (2015), [Oregon HB 3350](#) (2017) and [Virginia](#) (2019). New Mexico's Outdoor Recreation Division ([SB 462](#)) also included creation of the Outdoor Equity Fund.



Increasing Park Access

States can reduce barriers and create incentives for park access. Many states grant free entry to state parks for students of a certain age or grade, such as [Nevada AB 385](#) (2017) which applies to students ages 9 to 11. Utah has created the Every Kid Outdoor Initiative ([HCR 004](#)) that encourages youth outdoor engagement through a passport program full of activities.



Public Lands Day

States have selected a specific day to promote outdoor recreation and organize annual events. Examples include [Colorado SB 21](#) (2016), [Nevada SB 413](#) (2017), [New Mexico SM 11](#) (2016), [Ohio HR 120](#) (2015), [Oregon HB 2143](#) (2017), and [Virginia HJR 640](#) (2017).

For more information, contact NCEL Deputy Director Dylan McDowell at (202) 744-1006 or dylan@ncelenviro.org. The NCEL team is prepared to offer personalized assistance such as sample legislation and ongoing connections to experts and more than 70 legislators pursuing outdoor engagement policies.

