

THE ORIGINAL CAHILL POLICY LETTER, 1979



State of California M e m o r a n d u m

Date: MAY 3 1 1979
To: All Division/Office Chiefs
All District Superintendents
All Area Managers

From: Department of Parks and Recreation
Subject: Clothing Optional Beaches

No clothing optional beaches will be designated within the California State Park System at this time. During the public meeting process, it became clear to me that the public is extremely polarized on this issue. It also became clear that there is a serious concern on the part of clothing optional beach opponents about the extra costs of patrolling beaches so designated.

Proponents' arguments that a few miles of beach be set aside for their use were pervasive. However, serious opposition from legislators, county supervisors and local governing bodies lead me to believe that designating such areas will focus opponents' attention upon what seems to be a victimless crime at worst, and certainly an innocuous action.

The cost of extra services argument is a good one. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Department that enforcement of nude sunbathing regulations within the State Park System shall be made only upon the complaint of a private citizen. Citations or arrests shall be made only after attempts are made to elicit voluntary compliance with the regulations. This policy should free up enforcement people to concentrate on other pressing duties.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Russell W. Cahill".

Russell W. Cahill
Director

Note: The "Cahill Policy" as it has become known, was upheld in CALIFORNIA VS. BOST, 1988 (People vs. Eric John Bost, Placer County Superior (Appellate) No. 75689.) and has become the legal way nudists can enjoy federal and state park land. However, local deputies are not often familiar with the policy and often attempt to issue tickets with no other complainers present other than themselves. As a result, many nudist carry a copy of the policy with them to politely "educate" the deputy or ranger.