

STATEMENT OF STEPHANIE TOOTHMAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CULTURAL RESOURCES, PARTNERSHIPS, AND SCIENCE, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS OF THE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE, CONCERNING S. 916 AND H.R. 1033, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE ACQUISITION AND PROTECTION OF NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT BATTLEFIELDS AND ASSOCIATED SITES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR AND THE WAR OF 1812 UNDER THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD PROTECTION PROGRAM

JULY 31, 2013

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 916 and H.R. 1033, to authorize the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 under the American Battlefield Protection Program.

The Department supports S. 916 and H.R. 1033 with an amendment described later in this statement. This legislation would expand the American Battlefield Protection Program to include both the War of 1812 and Revolutionary War battlefields in addition to Civil War battlefields, which are covered under the current program. It would authorize a total of \$10 million in grants for the American Battlefield Protection Program for both Civil War battlefield sites and Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefield sites, for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

In March 2008, the National Park Service transmitted the *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 Sites in the United States*, which identified and determined the relative significance of sites related to the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The study assessed the short and long-term threats to the sites. Following the success of the 1993 *Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields*, this study similarly provides alternatives for the preservation and interpretation of the sites by Federal, State, and local governments or other public or private entities.

The direction from Congress for the study was the same as for a Civil War sites study of the early 1990s. As authorized by Congress for this study, the National Park Service looked at sites and structures that are thematically tied with the nationally significant events that occurred during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The result was a more thorough survey that represents twice the field effort undertaken for the Civil War study.

Building upon this recent study, S. 916 and H.R. 1033 would create a matching grant program for Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 sites that closely mirrors a very successful matching grant program for Civil War sites. The Civil War acquisition grant program was first authorized by Congress in the Civil War Battlefield Protection Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-359), and was reauthorized by the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-11). That grant fund has been tremendously successful in allowing local preservation efforts to permanently preserve Civil War battlefield land with a minimum of Federal assistance.

With the release of the *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 Sites in the United States*, communities interested in preserving their Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 sites can take the first steps similar to those taken by the Civil War advocates 20 years ago. If established, this new grant program can complement the existing grant program for Civil War battlefields and, in doing so, become a benefit to the American people by providing for the preservation and protection of a greater number of sites from the Revolutionary War and War of 1812.

The NPS is currently finalizing its update to the 1993 Civil War Sites report, which reviews the conditions of 383 Civil War battlefields, and which we plan to transmit to Congress in 2013. As currently drafted, S. 916 and H.R. 1033 require another update of the condition of these same Civil War battlefields in five years, in addition to an update of the 677 sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 identified in the *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 Sites in the United States*. The NPS feels that updating information for all of these sites, most of which are not within the National Park System itself, will not be feasible in five years. Therefore, the NPS suggests one change in the reporting language of the bill so that the reporting requirement for the Civil War update is not later than 10 years after the date of enactment.

The Department recommends an amendment to S. 916 and H.R. 1033 to include language for combined funding of \$20 million for both the Civil War and the Revolutionary War and War of 1812 acquisition grant programs in each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. Under current law, \$10 million is authorized for the Civil War battlefields alone. With the addition of the Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefields to the program, we believe that a \$20 million annual authorization would be appropriate. We would be happy to provide language for this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony. I would be pleased to respond to any questions from you and members of the committee.