

STATEMENT OF VICTOR KNOX, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S. 610, TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO CONDUCT A SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY OF P.S. 103 IN WEST BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

June 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide the Department of the Interior's views on S. 610, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of P.S. 103 in West Baltimore, Maryland, and for other purposes.

The Department supports enactment of S. 610. However, we believe that priority should be given to the 33 previously authorized studies for potential units of the National Park System, potential new National Heritage Areas, and potential additions to the National Trails System and National Wild and Scenic Rivers System that have not yet been transmitted to Congress.

S. 610 authorizes a special resource study of Public School 103 and other resources in the neighborhood that relate to the early life of Thurgood Marshall in Baltimore, Maryland. This study would determine whether this site meets the National Park Service's criteria for inclusion in the National Park System of national significance, suitability, and feasibility, and need for National Park Service management. The study would also consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the resources by the Federal government, State or local government entities, or private and non-profit entities. Alternatives might include, for example, the designation of the site as an affiliated area of the National Park Service, where the National Park Service would provide technical assistance to the site but not own or manage it. We estimate the cost of the study to range from \$200,000 to \$300,000, based on similar types of studies conducted in recent years.

P.S. 103 was originally built in 1877 for West Baltimore's white immigrant population but, in 1911, it became a segregated African-American school serving the Upton community of West Baltimore. The school is significant for its role in the education of Thurgood Marshall, who is best known as the lead counsel for the landmark school desegregation case, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and as the first African-American Supreme Court Justice. Marshall's life and his life's work began in Baltimore: it is the city where he was born in 1908, where he began his public education, and where he won his first civil rights cases as a young attorney. Thurgood Marshall attended P.S. 103 from 1st through 8th grade (1914 to 1921).

Marshall's accomplishments in systematically dismantling the legal framework for Jim Crow segregation are the foundation upon which the success of the Civil Rights Movement was built. P.S. 103 is owned by the City of Baltimore and is included in the Baltimore National Heritage Area.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes our prepared statement. I would be happy to respond to any questions about this matter.

STATEMENT OF VICTOR KNOX, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S. 782, TO DIRECT THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO ESTABLISH A BISON MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK.

June 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 782, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a bison management plan for Grand Canyon National Park.

The Department opposes S. 782 because it would disrupt an ongoing planning effort for managing bison at Grand Canyon National Park, and may cause confusion about the National Park Service's existing authorities to manage wildlife populations through a variety of means, including the use of skilled volunteers.

S. 782 would direct the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to publish a bison management plan for Grand Canyon National Park (park) no later than 180 days after the enactment of this legislation. The bill would require the plan to include reduction, through humane lethal culling by skilled public volunteers and by other nonlethal means, of the population of bison in the park that the Secretary determines are detrimental to the use of the park. The bill provides that notwithstanding the Act of March 2, 1929 (16 U.S.C. 198c), which is applicable only to Rocky Mountain National Park, or any other provision of law, a skilled public volunteer may remove a full bison harvested from the park. The bill also requires the Secretary to coordinate with the Arizona Game and Fish Commission regarding the development and implementation of the management plan, and that the Secretary comply with all applicable Federal environmental laws (including regulations), including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). And, the bill clarifies that nothing in the Act applies to the taking of wildlife in the park for any purpose other than the implementation of the management plan.

The National Park Service (NPS) has several tools available for directly managing ungulates to meet resource management objectives. These tools include both lethal and non-lethal methods for removing ungulates when the NPS determines that population numbers are too high. Under existing authorities, lethal removal of ungulates can be accomplished by using National Park Service employees, contractors, or skilled volunteers, or a combination of the above. Public hunting can also be used in parks where Congress has expressly authorized it, although hunting is not authorized at Grand Canyon National Park and S. 782 does not propose to do so. The appropriate means of culling is selected based the type of park unit, location, resource issue, conditions at the park, funding, public input, logistics and other concerns. For these reasons, the NPS has not established one method as preferred over any of the others, and analyzes the full suite of tools available for each situation. The preferred action is selected through a planning process that is accompanied by a NEPA review of reasonable and available alternatives.

The NPS has typically used professional sharp shooters to cull whitetail deer in parks in the eastern United States, including at Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C., and Catoctin Mountain Park in Maryland. Professional sharp shooters were also used at Channel Island National Park in California to cull elk on Santa Rosa Island. In other cases, including Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado and Theodore Roosevelt National Park in South Dakota, skilled volunteers have been used to cull elk.

With regard to Grand Canyon National Park, the NPS is currently in the process of developing the alternatives for the Grand Canyon Bison Management Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). We expect to have the DEIS out for public review and comment in the winter of 2016. As part of the alternatives development process with our cooperating agencies, including Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), we are considering lethal removal, or "culling", of bison as an option for reducing bison density in the park. The use of skilled volunteers in the culling operation would be part of the analysis. If the final plan includes the use of skilled volunteers in a culling operation, we would collaborate with AGFD on implementation including the requirements and protocols for selecting volunteers, and would follow applicable federal law and regulation with regard to disposition of carcasses. S. 782 would disrupt this planning effort.

Further, although S. 782 requires the Secretary to comply with NEPA in developing the bison management plan, the legislation is contrary to NEPA to several ways. For example, by directing the Secretary to put into place a plan to reduce bison using skilled volunteers, the bill appears to circumvent the NEPA process by predetermining a specific outcome or alternative. This approach is counter to NEPA, which requires Federal land managers to consider a range of reasonable alternatives, including no action, and to provide opportunities for public engagement during the NEPA process. Additionally, attempting to complete a plan in 180 days as proposed in the legislation also runs counter to NEPA, and our efforts to work collaboratively with our partners and neighbors, as it complicates our ability to adequately involve the public, tribes, other stakeholders, and cooperating agencies, including the AGFD.

Finally, the Department is also concerned that by attempting to provide this duplicative authority to use skilled volunteers in culling operations, S. 782 may cause confusion about the NPS's existing authority to carry out culling operations using skilled volunteers. While the NPS's authority to manage ungulate populations through lethal reduction has been upheld in court, S. 782 seems to call that authority into question, which could cause unnecessary confusion and be counterproductive to wildlife management efforts across the National Park System.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or the other members of the subcommittee may have.

STATEMENT OF VICTOR KNOX, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S. 145, TO REQUIRE THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TO REFUND TO STATES ALL STATE FUNDS THAT WERE USED TO REOPEN AND TEMPORARILY OPERATE A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM DURING THE OCTOBER 2013 SHUTDOWN

June 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to provide the Department of the Interior's views on S. 145, a bill to require the Director of the National Park Service to refund to States all State funds that were used to reopen and temporarily operate a unit of the National Park System during the October 2013 shutdown.

S. 145 requires the Director of the National Park Service to reimburse each State that provided funds to open and temporarily operate a unit (or units) of the National Park System in October 2013, when there was a lapse in appropriations for most Federal government activities. The bill specifies that the reimbursement shall be carried out using funds appropriated for the National Park Service after enactment of this legislation. We estimate that the cost of reimbursing the States would be approximately \$2 million.

From October 1 through October 16, 2013, the National Park Service, along with other bureaus and offices of the Department of the Interior, implemented a shutdown of our activities due to a lapse in appropriations. Under the closure determination and notice issued by the Director of the National Park Service, and consistent with applicable law, the National Park Service closed and secured all 401 national parks across the country, suspended all activities, and furloughed more than 20,000 National Park Service employees.

In response to the economic impacts that the park closures were having on many communities and local businesses, as the shutdown entered a second week, Secretary Jewell announced that the Department would consider agreements with Governors who indicated an interest and ability to fully fund National Park Service personnel to reopen specified national parks in their States. Six States – Arizona, Colorado, New York, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Utah – signed donation agreements with the Department to open a total of 13 park units that are all significant contributors to tourism in the States where they are located. State donations under these agreements totaled approximately \$3.6 million. Once these agreements were signed and the funds were transferred, the National Park Service reopened the national parks in accordance with the specific agreements.

Under the terms of the agreements, the States donated to the National Park Service lump sum payments in advance to cover the cost of operating the parks for a specific number of days. Further, these agreements stipulated that funds donated and used to re-open the parks could not be returned to the States. The employees who returned to work in these parks during the

shutdown were paid for these days out of the funds donated by the States. When Congress passed a continuing resolution providing appropriations for the first three and a half months of FY 2014 on October 16, 2013, the National Park Service was able to resume operations on October 17, 2013, and stop charging employee time against the funds that had been donated by the States.

Once the shutdown ended, the National Park Service immediately began the process of reimbursing the six States for the portion of donated funding that was not expended to operate the parks, which totaled approximately \$1.6 million. However, the National Park Service does not have the authority to reimburse States for the portion of funding that was expended (approximately \$2 million); an act of Congress is needed for that. S. 145 would provide that authority. We would like to point out that, as written, the source of funds for repayment will be derived from appropriations made after the enactment of this bill, not from funds received by the parks in FY14 or FY15.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony, and I would be happy to answer any questions you or other members of the subcommittee may have.

**STATEMENT OF VICTOR KNOX, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING,
FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE
INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S. 319, TO
DESIGNATE A MOUNTAIN IN THE STATE OF ALASKA AS MOUNT DENALI.**

June 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 319, a bill to designate a mountain in the State of Alaska as Mount Denali.

The National Park Service appreciates the long history and public interest for both the name Mount McKinley and the traditional Athabascan name, Denali. The Department respects the choice made by this legislation, and does not object to S. 319.

Located in what is now Denali National Park and Preserve, the highest peak in North America has been known by many names. The National Park Service's administrative history of the park notes that, "The Koyukon called it *Deenaalee*, the Lower Tanana named it *Deenaadheet* or *Deennadhee*, the Dena'ina called it *Dghelay Ka'a*, and at least six other Native groups had their own names for it.

In the late 18th century various Europeans came calling, and virtually everyone who passed by was moved to comment on it. The Russians called it *Bulshaia* or *Tenada*, and though explorers from other nations were less specific, even the most hard-bitten adventurers were in awe of its height and majesty.

No American gave it a name until Densmore's Mountain appeared in the late 1880s, and the name that eventually stuck—Mount McKinley—was not applied until the waning days of the nineteenth century," a gesture of support to then-President William McKinley.

In 1975, the State of Alaska officially recognized Denali as the name of the peak, and requested action by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names to do the same.

In 1980, Congress changed the name of Mount McKinley National Park to Denali National Park and Preserve (P.L. 96-487, Section 202), but did not act on the name change for the mountain.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony, and I would be happy to answer any questions you or other members may have.

STATEMENT OF VICTOR KNOX, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S. 329, TO AMEND THE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT TO DESIGNATE CERTAIN SEGMENTS OF THE FARMINGTON RIVER AND SALMON BROOK IN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT AS COMPONENTS OF THE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

June 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee today to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 329, a bill to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the Farmington River and Salmon Brook in the State of Connecticut as components of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and for other purposes.

The Department supports enactment of S. 329 with an amendment that is described later in this statement. The National Park Service's study of the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook, transmitted to Congress on October 17, 2013, determined that the segments proposed for designation under this bill are eligible for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

S. 329 would designate 35.3 miles of the Farmington River and the entire 26.4 miles of its major tributary, Salmon Brook, as part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior. The segments would be managed in accordance with the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Management Plan (June 2011) with the Secretary coordinating administration and management with a locally based management committee, as specified in the plan. The bill would authorize the Secretary to enter into cooperative agreements with the State of Connecticut, the adjoining communities, and appropriate local planning and environmental organizations. S. 329 would also make an adjustment to the upper Farmington Wild and Scenic River, which was designated in 1994, by adding 1.1 miles to the lower end of that 14-mile designation.

S. 329 would complete the wild and scenic river designation of the Farmington River in Connecticut by designating all of the mainstem Farmington River segments found to meet the criteria of eligibility and suitability. At the same time, S. 329 would provide for the continued operation of one existing hydroelectric facility – Rainbow Dam in Windsor – and allow for potential hydroelectric development of existing dams in the Collinsville stretch of the river, which is currently the subject of an active Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) licensing proceeding sponsored by the Town of Canton.

P.L. 109-370, the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Study Act of 2005, authorized the study of the segments proposed for designation in S. 329. The National Park Service conducted the study in close cooperation with the adjoining communities, the State of Connecticut, the

Farmington River Watershed Association, the Stanley Black & Decker Corporation (owner of Rainbow Dam) and other interested local parties.

Although the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires the development of a comprehensive river management plan within three years of the date of designation, it has become the practice of the National Park Service to prepare this plan as part of a study of potential wild and scenic rivers when much of the river runs through private lands. This allows the National Park Service to consult widely with local landowners, federal and state land management agencies, local governments, river authorities, and other groups that have interests related to the river prior to any recommendation for designation. Early preparation of the plan also assures input from these entities as well as users of the river on the management strategies that would be needed to protect the river's resources.

Technical assistance provided as a part of the study made possible the development of the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Management Plan (June 2011). This plan is based primarily around local partner actions designed to guide the management of the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook with or without a National Wild and Scenic River designation.

The study concluded that the proposed segments of the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook are eligible and suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System because of their free-flowing nature and outstandingly remarkable geology, water quality, biological diversity, cultural landscape, recreation values and local authority to protect and enhance these values. These findings substantiate the widely held view of the Farmington River as Connecticut's premier, free-flowing river resource for a diversity of natural and cultural values, including one of New England's most significant whitewater boating runs, regionally unique freshwater mussel populations, and outstanding examples of archaeological and historical sites and districts spanning Native American, colonial and early manufacturing periods. Salmon Brook is, in its own right, highly significant for outstanding water quality and significant cold water fishery.

If S. 329 is enacted, the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook would be administered as a partnership wild and scenic river, similar to several other designations in the Northeast, including the upper Farmington River and the Eightmile River in Connecticut. This approach emphasizes local and state management solutions, and has proven effective as a means of protecting outstandingly remarkable natural, cultural and recreational resource values without the need for direct federal management or land acquisition.

We recommend amending S. 329 to ensure that if operations of the Rainbow Dam were to be changed, wild and scenic river values upstream and downstream of the hydro project would be protected. We would be pleased to work with the sponsor and the committee on the appropriate language for that purpose.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions you or other committee members may have regarding this bill.

STATEMENT OF VICTOR KNOX, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES, AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S. 403, TO REVISE THE AUTHORIZED ROUTE OF THE NORTH COUNTRY NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL IN NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA AND TO EXTEND THE TRAIL INTO VERMONT TO CONNECT WITH THE APPALACHIAN NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

June 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 403, to revise the authorized route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in northeastern Minnesota and to extend the trail into Vermont to connect with the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, and for other purposes.

The Department supports enactment of S. 403. This legislation would make two critically important improvements to the North Country National Scenic Trail: it would reroute a portion of the trail in Minnesota around dense swampland, and it would link this trail to the Appalachian Trail.

S. 403 would amend section 5(a)(8) of the National Trails System Act to revise the route of the trail in northeastern Minnesota and extend the trail beyond its current terminus in New York eastward into Vermont, increasing the total length of the trail from approximately 4,000 miles to approximately 4,600 miles. We note that although the legislated length of the trail is 3,200 miles, this figure was based upon estimates at the time of the passage of the bill that authorized the trail, and more accurate mapping has since shown the actual mileage to be closer to 4,000 miles.

The North Country National Scenic Trail was authorized by Congress in 1980 to provide superlative outdoor recreation opportunities and conservation of nationally significant scenic, historic, natural and cultural qualities along the trail corridor, to provide a premier trail experience, and to encourage and assist volunteer citizen involvement in the planning, development, maintenance and management of the trail. The trail, which is one of six designated National Scenic Trails administered by the National Park Service, spans much of the northern United States, stretching from North Dakota to New York.

The current authorized route of the trail in northeastern Minnesota traverses approximately 93 miles of black spruce and tamarack swamp, extending westward from Jay Cooke State Park south of Duluth, to the Chippewa National Forest southwest of Grand Rapids. Because of the location and difficult environmental conditions within the swamp, no portion of this section of the trail has been constructed. Approximately seventy percent of the proposed revision — referred to as the Arrowhead Reroute — consists of three existing hiking trails: the Superior Hiking Trail, the Border Route Trail, and the Kekekabic Trail. These trails, which total approximately 400 miles, follow the north shore of Lake Superior and traverse the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in the Superior National Forest. The remaining portion of the Arrowhead Reroute — approximately 173 miles — would be new trail located over a combination of public and private lands. The net total

increase in the Minnesota portion of the North Country National Scenic Trail would be approximately 480 miles.

Since 1987, Minnesota hiking groups have repeatedly asked the NPS to study the revised route. In response to these requests, the NPS conducted the *Northeastern Minnesota Route Assessment* between 1999 and 2004. In 2003 and 2004, the National Park Service held public meetings in Duluth, Ely, Grand Rapids, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Public comments reflected broad overall support for the Arrowhead Reroute, and strong support among the affected public agencies and jurisdictions. The plan and environmental assessment were approved by the NPS on September 30, 2004.

The extension of the trail route into Vermont would add approximately 66 miles to the North Country National Scenic Trail, 40 of which are already existing trails. The addition would extend from the trail's current terminus near Crown Point, New York, east to a point to be determined along the Long Trail – a National Recreation Trail in Vermont. The Long Trail then connects to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail at Maine Junction just east of Rutland, Vermont.

In the fall of 2009, the National Park Service began a study of the potential extension of the North Country National Scenic Trail in Vermont. In February 2010, three public meetings were held to announce the study and present conceptual corridors. Additional meetings were held with key stakeholders in October 2011. A public meeting to review the draft report was held on May 21, 2012. Public comments, and written and electronic responses, reflected broad overall support. *The Feasibility Study Corridor Plan and Environmental Assessment for Addison County, Vermont*, was approved by the NPS on December 16, 2013.

The NPS anticipates the cost of constructing and maintaining the Arrowhead reroute and the Vermont extension of the North Country National Scenic Trail would be manageable because the work would be done primarily by volunteers using hand tools, and current NPS staff would provide route planning and support for the volunteers who would help develop and maintain the path.

As an example, the North Country Trail Association and partners have committed to developing the connecting trail segments that will be needed between the end of the Kekekabic Trail and the Chippewa National Forest in Minnesota. Funding would be needed to supply trail markers, signage, tools, equipment, and materials. Recent average expenditures for volunteer supplies have cost the North Country National Scenic Trail approximately \$60,000 per year. The net increase of approximately 546 miles to the current trail would increase operational costs by approximately \$7,000, split between NPS support and that independently generated by the trail chapters and affiliates. The NPS portions could be accommodated within the trail's current budget.

The portions of the North Country National Scenic Trail that have yet to be built have not been laid out in detail. Rather, the studies identified respective corridors several miles wide within which the trail would eventually be laid out. The flexibility provided by these corridors would allow the NPS and its partners to design routes that will minimize the amount of private land involved.

Public Law 111-11, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, provides authority for Federal agencies to acquire lands or interests in lands from willing sellers for the North Country National Scenic Trail. As a National Scenic Trail based upon strong public-private partnerships and engaged volunteers, there is an opportunity to implement the proposed re-route and extension through a variety of actions and expenditures. Options for allowing access range from outright donation, to easements and access agreements facilitated by partner organizations, to fee simple acquisition from willing sellers. However, it is the intention of the NPS to pursue donations, easements, and agreements to ensure access whenever possible. Consequently, the NPS is unable to estimate land acquisition costs. However, efforts would be made to keep Federal expenditures to a minimum.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony. I would be glad to answer any questions that you or other members of the subcommittee may have.

STATEMENT OF VICTOR KNOX, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S. 521, TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO CONDUCT A SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY OF PRESIDENT STATION IN BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

June 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide the Department of the Interior's views on S. 521, to conduct a special resource study of President Station in Baltimore, Maryland, and for other purposes.

The Department supports enactment of S. 521 with technical amendments. However, we believe that priority should be given to the 33 previously authorized studies for potential units of the National Park System, potential new National Heritage Areas, and potential additions to the National Trails System and National Wild and Scenic Rivers System that have not yet been transmitted to Congress.

S. 521 authorizes a special resource study of the President Street Station in Baltimore, Maryland. This study would determine whether this site meets the National Park Service's criteria for inclusion in the National Park System of national significance, suitability, and feasibility, and need for National Park Service management. The study would also consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the resources by the Federal government, State or local government entities, or private and non-profit entities. Alternatives might include, for example, the designation of the site as an affiliated area of the National Park Service, where the National Park Service would provide technical assistance to the site but not own or manage it. We estimate the cost of the study to range from \$200,000 to \$300,000, based on similar types of studies conducted in recent years.

The President Street Station was built by the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad. Opened in 1850, it served as the company's passenger terminus with connections south to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad terminal via horse-drawn track through the City of Baltimore. Originally consisting of a headhouse, a 208-foot long barrel vaulted train shed, and a freight house, only the headhouse remains today. The property is associated with the Baltimore Riot of 1861, where members of the Massachusetts militia on their way to Washington were attacked by a mob as they transited the city, resulting in the deaths of four soldiers and twelve civilians. That event is considered the first act in the Civil War in which blood was shed. The station is also recognized by the National Park Service's Network to Freedom program for its use by the General Vigilance Committee Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia, as well as other groups and individuals, to escape or aid others in escaping slavery.

President Street Station is owned by the City of Baltimore. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is included in the Baltimore National Heritage Area. It houses the Baltimore Civil War Museum which is operated by a state-chartered organization, the Friends of President Street Station, and is open to the public.

We recommend two technical amendments, which are attached below: one to update the reference to the law that set requirements for special resource studies; the other to correct the name of the train station in the title of the bill.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes our prepared statement. I would be happy to respond to any questions about this matter.

Proposed amendments to S. 521, President Street Station Special Resource Study

On page 3, lines 5-6, strike “section 8 of Public Law 91-383 (16 U.S.C. 1a-5)” and insert “section 100507 of title 54, United States Code”.

Amend the title to read: “To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of President Street Station in Baltimore, Maryland, and for other purposes.”.

STATEMENT OF VICTOR KNOX, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONCERNING S. 1483, TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO STUDY THE SUITABILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING THE JAMES K. POLK HOME IN COLUMBIA, TENNESSEE, AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

June 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's testimony regarding S. 1483, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the James K. Polk home in Columbia, Tennessee, as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

The Department supports enactment of this legislation with amendments described later in this testimony. However, we believe that priority should be given to the 33 previously authorized studies for potential units of the National Park System, potential new National Heritage Areas, and potential additions to the National Trails System and National Wild and Scenic Rivers System that have not yet been transmitted to Congress.

S. 1483 authorizes a special resource study of the James K. Polk home in Columbia, Tennessee. This study would determine whether this site meets the National Park Service's criteria for inclusion in the National Park System of national significance, suitability, and feasibility, and need for National Park Service management. The National Park Service recently conducted a reconnaissance survey that preliminarily evaluated the James K. Polk home and found that, because the site has the potential to meet the National Park Service's criteria for inclusion in the National Park System, further study was warranted.

The study would also consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the resources by the Federal government, State or local government entities, or private and non-profit entities. Alternatives might include, for example, the designation of the site as an affiliated area of the National Park Service, where the National Park Service would provide technical assistance to the site but not own or manage it. We estimate the cost of the study to range from \$200,000 to \$300,000, based on similar types of studies conducted in recent years.

James Knox Polk was born in Mecklenberg County, North Carolina, on November 2, 1795. In 1806, at the age of eleven, he moved with his family to Tennessee, settling in what is now Maury County. Samuel Polk, his father, purchased three lots in the town of Columbia in 1816 and constructed a two-story brick house (the present Polk Home) on the corner of West Seventh Street and South High Street. Samuel and his wife Jane remained in the house until their deaths in 1827 and 1852, respectively.

James K. Polk lived at the home after graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and for the next few years as he traveled to Nashville to read law with Felix Grundy.

While living with his family and passing the bar in 1820, Polk began a successful law practice in Columbia and campaigned for the state legislature. Though Samuel and Jane Polk's house in Columbia was only a short-term home for James K. Polk, it is the only extant residence associated with the eleventh President, besides the White House, and marks the beginning of his political career. He moved to a new home a few blocks away when he married Sarah Childress of Murfreesboro on January 1, 1824.

The Polk Home in Columbia remained in the family until 1862 and then changed owners several times before it was purchased by the State of Tennessee in 1929. At the same time, a descendant of the Polk family established the James K. Polk Memorial Association of Nashville and the James K. Polk Memorial Auxiliary of Columbia committed to "operate, maintain, preserve, and restore" the Polk Ancestral Home and properties, and also to "perpetuate the memory of the eleventh President of the United States." The Memorial Association opened the home to the public in 1929.

In 1937, the State acquired the adjacent lot to the south and reconstructed the kitchen outbuilding. In 1941, the State bought the next-door Sisters' House; an 1818 residence constructed by James K. Polk's brother-in-law and inhabited by two of his sisters and their families. Additional land was added to the site in 1953 and 1961, expanding the garden. In 1961, the Polk home was designated a National Historic Landmark. In 2009, with private funding, the Memorial Association purchased an 1882 church on the same block and renovated the space into a state-of-the-art exhibit facility. The renovated church, Polk Presidential Hall, has hosted traveling and original exhibits related to the U.S. Presidency and American society and culture during the Polk period. Two privately owned commercial buildings remain on the same block as the Polk Home, between the Polk Presidential Hall and the reconstructed kitchen.

Although the site is owned by the State (with the exception of Polk Presidential Hall), the Memorial Association still administers and operates the James K. Polk Home and Museum while owning and preserving over 1,300 artifacts and original documents directly relating to President Polk. The Memorial Association also offers educational programs on President Polk to regional and national audiences. The Association has an eight-member Board of Directors that employs one full-time professional Executive Director and one full-time Curator of Collections. Two paid docents staff the Sisters' House and provide house tours and educational programs for the 10,000 to 20,000 annual visitors.

S. 1483 includes certain requirements for the study which we recommend deleting. Specifically, we urge deleting section 3(c)(5), which would require an analysis of the effect of designation as a unit of the National Park System on existing commercial and recreational activities, and on activities concerning energy production and transmission infrastructure, and on the authority of state and local governments to manage those activities. We also urge deleting section 3(c)(6), which would require an identification of any authorities that would compel or permit the Secretary of the Interior to influence or participate in local land use decisions or place restrictions on non-federal lands.

The purpose of conducting a special resource study is to determine whether a resource meets the criteria for inclusion in the National Park System and, if it does not, to provide information on alternative means to protect the resource. We believe that the special resource study requirements under existing law result in a sufficient amount of information and analysis of the effects of including

a resource in the National Park System. These additional requirements could potentially increase the cost of the study and the time required to complete it.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you or other members of the subcommittee may have.

STATEMENT OF VICTOR KNOX, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S. 873, TO DESIGNATE THE WILDERNESS WITHIN THE LAKE CLARK NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE IN THE STATE OF ALASKA AS THE JAY S. HAMMOND WILDERNESS AREA.

June 10, 2015

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 873, a bill to designate the wilderness within the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve in the State of Alaska as the Jay S. Hammond Wilderness Area.

The Department supports S. 873, which would designate the approximately 2.6 million acres of National Wilderness Preservation System land located within the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve as the "Jay S. Hammond Wilderness Area." This designation is a fitting and appropriate way to recognize Hammond's significant contributions to the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), the National Park System, and Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, which was an important part of an extraordinary legacy of public service.

In 1946, following his military service as a fighter pilot during World War II, Jay Hammond came to Alaska and became a bush pilot, guide and trapper. In 1949, Hammond graduated from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and went to work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employee, Hammond conducted wildlife surveys of the Lake Clark area and located a homestead along Lake Clark. He lived with his wife Bella in their lakeside homestead from about 1982 until his death on August 2, 2005. Bella still resides in the homestead and enjoys the splendid views of the wilderness area.

In 1959, Hammond was elected to the state legislature and served several terms before being elected as a state senator in 1967. From 1972 to 1974, Hammond was the mayor of the Bristol Bay Borough. In 1974, he was elected Governor of Alaska, and served the state in that role until 1982. During his tenure, he oversaw the building and the opening of the Alaska Pipeline and preserved a large portion of the oil lease revenues in the form of a Permanent Fund which has been in existence for three decades. As a governor who sought to balance the development of Alaska's energy resources with the conservation of the state's vast untouched natural resources, he worked with the Federal government to achieve enactment of the legislation that became ANILCA.

ANILCA protected 104 million acres of land. It added more than 40 million acres in 10 new units of the National Park System, including the 3.86 million-acre Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. The law also designated the 2.6 million acres of wilderness within Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. Governor Hammond later said that what President Carter had done with the signing of ANILCA was "locking Alaska open" for future generations of Americans to enjoy and preserve for all time.

The National Park Service Management Policies 2006 states that “to be permanently commemorated in a national park is a high honor, affording a degree of recognition that implies national importance.” The policies support the commemorative naming of national park resources only in cases where there is a compelling justification for the recognition. In general, a compelling justification involves an association between the park and the person that is of exceptional importance, as well as a lapse of at least five years since the person’s death. The designation of wilderness within Lake Clark National Park and Preserve in honor of Jay S. Hammond meets these criteria.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony, and I would be happy to answer any questions you or other members may have.