

**STATEMENT OF PEGGY O'DELL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS,  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS OF THE SENATE ENERGY AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE, CONCERNING S. 155, TO DESIGNATE A  
MOUNTAIN IN THE STATE OF ALASKA AS DENALI.**

**April 23, 2013**

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 155, a bill to designate a mountain in the State of Alaska as 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. 155.

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.