

**STATEMENT OF P. DANIEL SMITH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, EXERCISING THE AUTHORITY OF THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, CONCERNING H.R. 5420 AND S. 3571, BILLS TO AUTHORIZE THE ACQUISITION OF LAND FOR ADDITION TO THE HOME OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**December 12, 2018**

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Chairman Daines, Ranking Member King, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 5420 and S. 3571, bills to authorize the acquisition of land for addition to the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site in the State of New York, and for other purposes.

The Department supports both bills and prefers S. 3571. Both bills would authorize the Secretary to acquire by donation, purchase from a willing seller using donated funds, or exchange, the approximately 89 acres of land identified as the Morgan property. S. 3571 would also authorize the purchase from a willing seller using appropriated funds.

The 89-acre Morgan property is composed of open fields along the north side of the Home of the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site entrance road and defines the first impression for visitors to the Roosevelt Home and Presidential Library. The property extends nearly to the Hudson River, with the western portion made up of wooded horse trails used by the Roosevelts and the Morgans from the 19<sup>th</sup> century on. The trails now form part of the Hyde Park Trail System that connects the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Vanderbilt Mansion, the Eleanor Roosevelt Home, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Top Cottage, which are all part of the National Park System. National Park Service (NPS) acquisition of the property would ensure the protection of the historic and visual character of the park entrance and would allow the NPS to re-establish agricultural fields that defined the eastern portion of the property during FDR's lifetime.

The property was bequeathed to the organization Scenic Hudson by its owner, Gerald Morgan, who died in 2011. Scenic Hudson has approached the NPS about the acquisition of the Morgan property. Because the property is adjacent to the park, the land could be acquired by donation and managed as part of the park under existing authorities; however, the NPS does not have the authority to purchase the land. Another local non-profit, The Franklin D. Roosevelt Hyde Park Foundation, is prepared to raise funds to acquire the Morgan property with the ultimate objective of donating it to the NPS. The NPS appreciates the Foundation's commitment to this objective, as land acquisition funding is not a priority as the Department is focusing resources on addressing the National Park Service's \$11.6 billion deferred maintenance backlog and other critical national park needs.

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