

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 6852

To designate Holcombe Rucker Park, in Harlem, New York, as a National Commemorative Site, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 19, 2023

Mr. ESPAILLAT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

To designate Holcombe Rucker Park, in Harlem, New York, as a National Commemorative Site, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Holcombe Rucker Park  
5 Landmark Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Holcombe Rucker Park is located between  
9 West 155th Street, 8th Avenue, and Harlem River  
10 Drive in Manhattan, New York.

1           (2) The park has been a source of inspiration,  
2           entertainment, and education for many people who  
3           have played or witnessed basketball games at the  
4           park, also serving as a showcase of talent, creativity,  
5           and diversity that reflects the spirit of Harlem.

6           (3) In 1974, this playground was renamed  
7           Holcombe Rucker Park after NYC Parks' beloved  
8           Playground Director, Holcombe Rucker, at the re-  
9           quest of Rucker's protégés.

10          (4) Holcombe Rucker (1926–1965) is remem-  
11          bered for the basketball tournaments he founded at  
12          this court and the generations of players he  
13          mentored.

14          (5) The basketball tournaments at the park's  
15          Greg Marius Court have been the subject of three  
16          films: Above the Rim, On Hallowed Ground:  
17          Streetball Champions of Rucker Park, and The  
18          Real: Rucker Pro Legends and Fathers of the Sport.

19          (6) Born and raised in Manhattan and schooled  
20          at Benjamin Franklin High School, Rucker worked  
21          as a Playground Director for NYC Parks at various  
22          Harlem parks from 1948 to 1964.

23          (7) A pioneer of social justice and racial equal-  
24          ity in sports, Rucker created his own basketball

1 tournament to serve as a platform to promote inte-  
2 gration and empower the black community.

3 (8) The park is considered the birthplace of  
4 streetball, a style of basketball that emphasizes cre-  
5 ativity, flair, and individual skills over formal rules  
6 and team play.

7 (9) Many NBA legends and stars have played  
8 at Holcombe Rucker Park, either before or after  
9 their professional careers, such as Kareem Abdul-  
10 Jabbar, Wilt Chamberlain, Julius Erving, Kobe Bry-  
11 ant, Kevin Durant, and LeBron James.

12 (10) The park has been featured in many docu-  
13 mentaries, movies, books, and video games that cele-  
14 brate the history and culture of streetball.

15 (11) Holcombe Rucker Park is home to the En-  
16 tertainer’s Basketball Classic (EBC), founded in  
17 1982 by Greg Marius, a rapper who wanted to show-  
18 case the talent and entertainment value of streetball,  
19 and has since become one of the most prestigious  
20 and popular streetball tournaments in the world.

21 (12) The park has served as a platform for  
22 many basketball players who could not obtain NBA  
23 opportunities due to racial discrimination or other  
24 barriers, including Earl “The Goat” Manigault, Joe