

Statement from Rep. Grace F. Napolitano on H.R. 4338, Route 66 National Historic Trail Designation Act

Chairman Westerman and Ranking Member Grijalva, thank you for marking up HR 4338, which establishes Route 66 as the 20th National Historic Trail as a part of the National Trails System Program.

I also want to thank my colleague and the sponsor of the bill, Representative Darin LaHood, and his continued efforts to work with me throughout the years on this critical legislation.

Route 66 runs east to west through my district as Foothill Boulevard and Huntington Drive in the Cities of La Verne, San Dimas, Azusa, Duarte, and Monrovia.

Our local restaurants, shops, and other businesses, like so many others dotting the interstate from the heartland to the west coast, provide rest breaks for travelers, allowing them to sample the local flavors of our communities that are proud to be connected by the iconic road.

By designating Route 66 as a federal trail, it would expand economic and historic development opportunities across all communities and states the Mother Road runs through – which includes Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

The Federal Government already recognizes the importance of Route 66 and the highway currently benefits from the National Park Service's Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, but this program expired in 2019 and is operating with very limited resources. HR 4338 would build off these efforts and ensure the programs' goals of preserving Route 66 can continue.

Once designated, it is vital that Congress support and adequately fund the National Historic Trail Program in order to support the addition of Route 66.

I urge my colleagues to support designating Route 66 as a National Historic Trail, ensuring that states and local communities have support in preserving, promoting, and capitalizing on economic development from Route 66 for generations to come.

I ask my colleagues to support this bill and I yield back.