

Opening Statement of  
Ranking Republican John Curtis  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
Legislative Hearing on H.R. 722, H.R. 1702,  
H.R. 2317, H.R. 3094, H.R. 3349,  
H.R. 3465, and H.R. 5068  
12.04.2019

I want to thank Chair Haaland for convening this hearing today. We have before us seven bills commemorating individuals, groups, and events that have shaped our Nation's story – recognizing both our nation's past tragedies and triumphs. This includes remembering and honoring the victims of the tragic Pulse Nightclub shooting, commemorating the founder of Labor Day, honoring journalists who were killed in the line of duty, recognizing the millions of women that worked on the home front during World War II to help their fellow

heroes win the war, memorializing the Texas Legation, and making it easier for Veterans to hold special events and demonstrations at our national memorials.

I am especially pleased to see the inclusion of one of my bills, H.R. 722, the Miracle Mountain Designation Act. My bill would designate a mountain near Elk Ridge City, Utah as “Miracle Mountain.” In early September 2018, the Pole Creek and Bald Mountain Fires burned roughly 20,000 acres in Utah. Elk Ridge City and Woodland Hills, located in Utah County, were nearly victims of this fire. Miraculously, due to a change in wind direction, on September 13 the fire suddenly halted, stayed behind a mountain peak, and spared the community. Since the fire, the unnamed peak has been referred to as ‘Miracle Mountain’ by many of my constituents.

Although last year's fire season was one of our worst, it brought out the best of Utah and our communities. I am pleased to have Elk Ridge City Mayor, Ty Ellis, with us here this morning. Recognizing that he had witnessed a miracle, shortly after the fire was contained, Mayor Ellis reached out to me to see if we could have the peak named 'Miracle Mountain.' I am grateful to Mayor Ellis, as well as all of the courageous federal, state, and local firefighters that worked tirelessly to battle the blaze. Naming the peak 'Miracle Mountain' is a fitting gesture of gratitude.

I want to thank all of the witnesses for being here today, and I look forward to hearing their testimony. Thank you, and I yield back.