

TESTIMONY OF CONGRESSMAN SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.
BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS
ON H.R. 5472, THE JIMMY CARTER NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
REDESIGNATION ACT

JULY 13, 2020

I want to thank Chairwoman Haaland and Ranking Member Young for giving me the opportunity to testify this afternoon on H.R. 5472, the Jimmy Carter National Historical Park Redesignation Act.

The legislation would change the name of the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site in Plains, Georgia to the Jimmy Carter National Historical Park, thereby ensuring that its nomenclature conforms to other non-contiguous sites within the National Park System.

It also would honor the wish our nation's thirty-ninth President, who is a dear friend of mine as well as my constituent. He and his wife, our former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, last week were blessed to celebrate their seventy-fourth wedding anniversary.

On March 22, 2019, President Carter also became our nation's longest-lived president, surpassing the lifespan of George H.W. Bush. This October, he will celebrate his ninety-sixth birthday.

As many of you are aware, President Carter has had a number of health challenges recently which has created a sense of urgency around this legislation and the rich legacy that he and Mrs. Carter want to leave to their long-time home in Plains.

After the Carters left the White House, the Carters and the Plains community took the initiative to preserve and protect the history of this small, rural, and agricultural community.

In 1987, Congress established the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site. It consists of the Plains Railroad Depot, which served as Jimmy Carter's campaign headquarters during the 1976 Presidential Campaign;

Jimmy Carter's Boyhood Farm; Plains High School, which the Carters attended and now serves as the visitor center and museum; and the Carter Home and Compound, where the Carters currently live and is now closed to the public.

In fact, the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site is the only site in the National Park System, aside from the White House, that is still an active presidential home. I have taken my entire staff there on a number of occasions so they could get a better feel and understanding of the values that shaped this great Georgian.

We listened to the messages recorded by the former President that tell visitors of his experiences as a child and young man and how they influenced his views. After touring the Depression-era farm, home, and school where he grew into manhood, every one of my staff members, including a number from Georgia and several who are not, told me they were inspired by what they learned about the life of Jimmy Carter, just as I have been.

I urge the Subcommittee to support this re-designation of the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site to the Jimmy Carter National Historical Park. It enjoys the bipartisan support of the entire Georgia congressional delegation as well as the Plains community. I ask unanimous consent that letters of support may be included in the record.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that the new Jimmy Carter National Historical Park continues to inspire generations of visitors as well as grow and positively impact the economy of Plains, Georgia.