

**Opening Statement for Ranking Member Fulcher**  
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands  
Legislative Hearing on H.R. 1548, H.R. 4658, H.R. 6364,  
H.R. 6442, H.R. 7496, H.R. 7615, H.R. 7693, and H.R. 7952  
June 14, 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today's bills deal with our nation's parks. Interestingly, this last weekend I had some relevant conversations with an Idaho family I've known for a long time. In recent years, this family has utilized their summer vacation time to visit a national park. This year, Yosemite was their intended destination. But unfortunately, they had to cancel the trip and replace it with a family "stay-cation" because of a problem we are all facing right now: gas and food prices.

I couldn't help but sense the disappointment, and also wonder how many other families are having to make similar decisions; or worse yet, how many are not just canceling vacations, but rather - going without necessities because they can't afford them.

Before serving in Congress, I used to frequently travel to Europe for business. I would cringe when I saw their gas prices... then thank the good Lord I lived in America where resources were plentiful, industry technology was state of the art, and by comparison, government policy allowed for reasonable access. But now, by our own doing, we have embraced policies that have resulted in a trade:

Prosperity for economic inflation, and product surpluses for product shortages. Gas is more than \$5 per gallon, and inflation just hit a 40 year high 8.6%.

Mr. Chairman, as we discuss these bills regarding parks: we must ask ourselves what is the value if no one can go? And as important as our national parks are, our constituents... at least mine in Idaho... aren't calling the office looking for help in this area. They're calling asking for help paying their gas bill.

Instead of making policy changes that would solve the problems, Congressional leadership has allowed the Biden administration to pause onshore

and offshore leasing, cancelled the Keystone XL Pipeline, and impose a chilling effect on domestic energy production.

The pipeline cancellation is notable because one of the majority leadership bills on today's hearing would authorize a natural gas distribution pipeline to cross through Valley Forge National Historical Park. The Keystone XL Pipeline, which does not cross through any national parks, could help alleviate the current energy crisis. When the administration cancelled the Keystone Pipeline, Chair Grijalva welcomed the news of the termination and stated: "This is a win for the American people, and I will

continue advancing forward-looking energy policies that will benefit our nation and spare communities and our environment from harm.” Chairman Grijalva: we can’t afford any more of your help.

But if you really do believe that utilizing Congresswoman Dean’s (HR 7952) bill (which puts a pipeline in a national park unit) would “spare our communities and environment from harm,” the minority would be happy to re-engage in discussions favoring the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Anyway... the bills on today’s agenda won’t allow us to solve the challenges surrounding gas prices and inflation, but I do appreciate the Majority

including my bill H.R. 6442, the PACTS Act, among those bills.

The PACTS Act will help the National Park Service reduce costs, share resources, and more efficiently tackle necessary deferred maintenance through the use of cooperative management agreements. These agreements allow the Park Service to improve units without relying on taxpayer money.

This is important because the National Park Service recently announced that its deferred maintenance backlog increased by nearly \$10 to \$21.8 billion, despite receiving billions of dollars via

the Great American Outdoors Act to address this issue.

This Committee has the power to make important changes to the direction we are heading on domestic energy production and transmission. It is my hope that the Majority will embrace the truth regarding the devastating problems caused by the Biden Administration. Thank you to the witnesses. I yield back.