

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL T. REYNOLDS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR,
CONGRESSIONAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL
RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS CONCERNING H.R. 386, A
BILL TO PROVIDE THAT NO FEDERAL FUNDS SHALL BE USED TO ALTER,
CHANGE, DESTROY, OR REMOVE, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, ANY NAME, FACE,
OR OTHER FEATURE ON THE MOUNT RUSHMORE NATIONAL MEMORIAL.**

JULY 13, 2023

Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 386, a bill to provide that no Federal funds shall be used to alter, change, destroy, or remove, in whole or in part, any name, face, or other feature on the Mount Rushmore National Memorial.

The Department takes seriously its commitment to protect resources entrusted to its management, including protecting the iconic carving of the four U.S. presidents on Mount Rushmore National Memorial. The Department, however, does not support H.R. 386 as it is unnecessary and, as drafted, could potentially interfere with the preservation and maintenance of this world-renowned landmark. Regarding the bill's naming of Mount Rushmore, the Department recognizes Congress' prerogative to enact this designation.

Located in the Black Hills of South Dakota, Mount Rushmore National Memorial was authorized in 1925 to commemorate the founding, expansion, preservation, and unification of the United States and has been under the administration of the National Park Service (NPS) since 1938. The famous mountainside sculpture paying tribute to Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt has become one of our Nation's most recognizable landmarks both at home and abroad. The 1,278-acre Memorial receives over two million visitors each year who have the opportunity not only to view the sculpture but also to experience the beauty of the Black Hills and learn about the complex and controversial history associated with the Memorial, which was established on lands that are sacred to Indigenous peoples.

Section 3 of H.R. 386 would prohibit the National Park Service (NPS) from using funds appropriated by Congress to administer the Memorial to "alter, change, destroy, or remove, in whole or in part, any name, face, or other feature" on the Memorial. Given the existing laws, regulations, and policies that protect the Memorial's sculpture in its historic form, the Department does not see a need for this legislation. Additionally, the NPS routinely performs vegetation treatments at the base of the sculpture to maintain the viewshed of the Memorial; maintains sensors and monitoring equipment on the features of the sculpture; and maintains and upgrades the security equipment, including fencing and other infrastructure, that supports protection of the sculpture. Depending on how the words "alter", "change", and "feature" are interpreted in the bill as drafted, this language could prevent the NPS from carrying out the very activities that help ensure that the Memorial remains safe and recognizable for future generations. However, if the Committee decides to move forward with H.R. 386, we would appreciate having the opportunity to work with the sponsor and the Committee to try to ensure

that the language does not jeopardize the necessary preservation and maintenance of the Memorial.

Section 4 of H.R. 386 would designate the mountain where Mount Rushmore National Memorial is located as Mount Rushmore. This section would establish in statute the name for the mountain that was recognized as Mount Rushmore by the United States Geographic Board in 1930. There is no proposal pending before that organization, now called the Board on Geographic Names, or in Congress, to change the name of Mount Rushmore. However, the Department recognizes that it is within the prerogative of Congress to pass legislation designating any geographic feature in the United States and thus provide a statutory confirmation of an existing name.

Chairman Tiffany, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL
RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS CONCERNING H.R. 1318, A
BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE LOCATION OF A MONUMENT ON THE NATIONAL
MALL TO COMMEMORATE AND HONOR THE WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE
MOVEMENT AND THE PASSAGE OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT TO THE
CONSTITUTION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

JULY 13, 2023

Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior’s views on H.R. 1318, a bill to authorize the location of a monument on the National Mall to commemorate and honor the women’s suffrage movement and the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, and for other purposes.

The Department strongly supports honoring the American suffragists’ long struggle to secure the 19th Amendment which provided women with the right to vote. We support building the Women’s Suffrage National Monument in a place of national honor and prominence. However, since the establishment of the Reserve by Congress in 2003, the Department has endeavored to protect the Reserve by discouraging the establishment of any new commemorative works within it. It is for that reason that we do not support H.R. 1318 as currently drafted. This position is consistent with other testimony the Department has submitted on legislation that proposes new commemorative works within the Reserve.

H.R. 1318 would authorize the Women’s Suffrage National Monument to be established in the Reserve, which otherwise would not be permitted under the Commemorative Works Act Commemorative Works Act (40 USC 89 et seq.) (CWA). The bill requires the monument to comply with other provisions of the CWA.

In December 2020, legislation to authorize the establishment of the Women’s Suffrage National Monument (then called Every Word We Utter Monument) was enacted as Public Law 116-217. This law authorizes the monument to be established on Federal land managed by the National Park Service or the General Services Administration in Washington, DC, in accordance with the CWA. The Department testified in support of authorizing the establishment of the monument with the understanding that the CWA, including the Act’s prohibition on locating new memorials in the Reserve, would apply.

The CWA was enacted to ensure that proper consideration is given to authorization, location, and design of new memorials within Washington, DC. Congress amended the CWA in 2003, establishing the Reserve and declaring it a completed work of civic art where “the siting of new commemorative works is prohibited.” The CWA identifies the Reserve as “the great cross-axis of the Mall” which extends from the United States Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial, and from the White House to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

The Department's concerns about establishing the Women's Suffrage National Monument in the Reserve are similar to those expressed by the Department on similar legislation. Other sponsors of memorials have sought prominent locations as well, and have worked with the National Park Service, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the Commission of Fine Arts to secure sites outside of the Reserve that meet their needs. The National Park Service is committed to continuing to work with the sponsors of the Women's Suffrage National Monument to identify a suitable location for this monument that is not in the Reserve.

Through communication that the National Park Service has had with the monument sponsor, we understand that they are also considering multiple sites in Area I. If the sponsors of the monument were to obtain approval from Congress for placement in Area I, a number of prominent sites would become available for consideration. Area I is part of the monumental core but includes sites outside of the Reserve. The monument sponsors would then have the full range of options available in both Area I and Area II.

Congress' 2003 Reserve designation responded to a pressing need to preserve the integrity of the National Mall and rapidly diminishing public space in the city's monumental core. The pressures on the Mall's open space have amplified through time. In addition to hosting over 35 million visitors to the Mall each year, more than 9,000 permitted events including 1,000 first amendment demonstrations take place on or near the National Mall annually. The space is also heavily used for recreational activities, national celebrations, critical operational and security movements associated with its placement at the city center, and park visitation. Maintaining the Mall's open spaces and existing architecture is essential to ensuring that it continues to convey its significance as our nation's premier civic space. We urge the Committee to protect this special place for the enjoyment of Americans for generations to come.

Chairman Tiffany, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL
RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS, CONCERNING H.R. 2717, A
BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR MUSEUM
FOUNDATION TO ESTABLISH A COMMEMORATIVE WORK ON THE NATIONAL
MALL TO HONOR THE EXTRAORDINARY ACTS OF VALOR, SELFLESS
SERVICE, AND SACRIFICE DISPLAYED BY MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS.**

JULY 13, 2023

Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 2717, a bill to authorize the location of a monument on the National Mall to commemorate and honor the extraordinary acts of valor, selfless service, and sacrifice displayed by Medal of Honor recipients.

The Department strongly supports honoring the extraordinary acts of our Nation's Medal of Honor recipients, and we support establishing the monument authorized for that purpose in a place of national honor and prominence. However, since the establishment of the Reserve by Congress in 2003, the Department has endeavored to protect the Reserve by discouraging the establishment of any new commemorative works within it. It is for that reason that we do not support H.R. 2717 as currently drafted. This position is consistent with other testimony the Department has submitted on legislation that proposes new commemorative works within the Reserve.

H.R. 2717 would authorize the National Medal of Honor Monument to be established in the Reserve and attached to, or not more than 1,000 feet from, the Lincoln Memorial. Locating the monument in the Reserve would otherwise not be permitted under the Commemorative Works Act (40 USC 89 et seq.) (CWA). In addition, siting the monument within 1,000 feet of the Lincoln Memorial would conflict with the CWA's prohibition on interfering with or encroaching on an existing commemorative work.

Legislation to authorize the establishment of the National Medal of Honor Monument was enacted in December, 2021, as Public Law 117-80. This law authorizes the monument to be established on Federal land managed by the National Park Service or the General Services Administration in Washington, DC, in accordance with the CWA. The Department testified in support of authorizing the establishment of the monument with the understanding that the CWA, including the Act's prohibition on locating new memorials in the Reserve, as well as its prohibition on interfering with or encroaching on an existing commemorative work, would apply.

The CWA was enacted to ensure that proper consideration is given to authorization, location, and design of new memorials within Washington, DC. Congress amended the CWA in 2003, establishing the Reserve and declaring it a completed work of civic art where "the siting of new commemorative works is prohibited." The CWA identifies the Reserve as "the great cross-axis

of the Mall” which extends from the United States Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial, and from the White House to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

The Department’s concerns about establishing the National Medal of Honor Monument in the Reserve are similar to those expressed by the Department on similar legislation. Other sponsors of memorials have sought prominent locations as well, and have worked with the National Park Service, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the Commission of Fine Arts to secure sites outside of the Reserve that meet their needs. The National Park Service is committed to working with the sponsors of the National Medal of Honor Monument to develop a site selection study that would work toward identification of a suitable location for this monument that is not in the Reserve.

Congress’ 2003 Reserve designation responded to a pressing need to preserve the integrity of the National Mall and rapidly diminishing public space in the city’s monumental core. The pressures on the Mall’s open space have amplified through time. In addition to hosting over 35 million visitors to the Mall each year, more than 9,000 permitted events including 1,000 first amendment demonstrations take place on or near the National Mall annually. The space is also heavily used for recreational activities, national celebrations, critical operational and security movements associated with its placement at the city center, and park visitation. Maintaining the Mall’s open spaces and existing architecture is essential to ensuring that it continues to convey its significance as our nation’s premier civic space. We urge the Committee to protect this special place for the enjoyment of Americans for generations to come.

Chairman Tiffany, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL
RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS CONCERNING H.R. 3448, A
BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 3081 OF TITLE 54, UNITED STATES CODE, TO
ENHANCE THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF AMERICA'S
BATTLEFIELDS.**

JULY 13, 2023

Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to provide the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 3448, a bill to amend chapter 3081 of title 54, United States Code, to enhance the protection and preservation of America's battlefields.

The Department supports the goals of H.R. 3448 to expand access to the American Battlefield Preservation Program to a broader range of stakeholders. However, we have concerns with certain provisions of the bill related to ensuring the continued stewardship of lands receiving Federal funding.

H.R. 3448 would amend the existing statute to:

- Add "Tribes" and "nonprofit organizations" to the list of entities eligible to receive Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants;
- Make "associated historic sites" in the *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields* and the *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States* no longer eligible for American Battlefield Protection Program grants;
- Extend the eligibility for Battlefield Restoration Grants to all eligible battlefield sites regardless of whether they have previously received Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants; and
- Require the program to submit updates to Congress on the *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields* and the *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States* detailing preservation activities, changes in condition, and other developments relating to the battlefields two years after the enactment of the bill and every ten years thereafter.

The American Battlefield Protection Act authorizes the National Park Service to administer the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) to protect battlefields and sites of armed conflict on American soil through technical assistance and financial assistance. The ABPP supports community-driven stewardship of historic resources through four grant opportunities: Preservation Planning, Battlefield Restoration, Battlefield Interpretation, and Battlefield Land Acquisition. All grants are awarded competitively and on an annual basis, except for Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant awards, which are made on a rolling basis throughout the year.

Preservation Planning Grants provide funds from National Recreation & Preservation (Cultural Programs) to State, Tribal, and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions to support preservation and planning projects at historic battlefields and associated sites in the United States. Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant awards are made from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to State and local governments to pay up to 50% of the cost of fee-simple acquisition or easement interest in properties within eligible sites; amounts available vary each year. Interpretation and Restoration grants annually award up to \$1 million each in LWCF funds to pay up to 50% of the cost for States, Tribes, local governments, and nonprofit organizations to interpret and restore “day of battle” conditions, respectively.

The Department would support expanding eligibility to include Tribes if the bill were amended to address any necessary authorizations related to tribal eligibility for LWCF funding as well as the feasibility of land transactions and the Federal financial assistance requirements for protective Federal covenants upon lands governed by a sovereign nation.

Regarding the provision of H.R. 3448 that would expand eligibility for Battlefield Land Acquisition Grants to include non-profit organizations, the Department would want to ensure non-profit recipients can guarantee the same degree of permanent protection that is required of State and local governments receiving ABPP funding.

H.R. 3448 would also expand the scope of the ABPP's Battlefield Restoration grants which, currently, are only provided for land that has been preserved through a Battlefield Land Acquisition grant. The Department supports the intent of this provision and would note that the ABPP program is currently working to determine if there is an administrative path to address the limitation on eligibility. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss possible conditions that should be required in conjunction with expanding eligibility.

H.R. 3448 would clarify that ABPP grants are limited to battlefields listed in the previous reports to Congress, specifically excluding non-battlefield “associated historic sites” listed in those reports. It would require the Department to submit updated Battlefield Reports to Congress every 10 years. The Department has no objections to these provisions.

The Department would appreciate the opportunity to work with the bill’s sponsor and the Committee on amendments to address the points raised in this statement.

Chairman Tiffany, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.