



Written Testimony in support of H. R. 3107 the “Improving Outdoor Recreation Coordination Act”

Before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Federal Lands

September 19, 2023

At Trust for Public Land, we connect people to the outdoors. We create parks and protect land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. We were founded in 1972 on the conviction that all people need access to nature and the outdoors, close to home, in the cities and communities where they live. We work with communities to create parks and protect public land where they’re needed most, as a matter of health, equity, and justice.

We are in support of this Act; however we encourage the Committee to include language which directs FICOR to make part of its purpose to focus on underserved communities, including Native tribes, that don’t have access to public parks within a 10 minute walk to their home.

Spending time outdoors is more than a nicety—it’s a necessity for a happy, healthy life. But access to parks isn’t equal, and disparities often fall on racial and economic divides. In low-income communities, communities of color, and rural areas, parks are fewer, smaller, more crowded, and less maintained than parks in higher-income or predominantly white communities. People need to feel that they are welcome and wanted at our public lands, and that they have open access to the outdoors.

Increasing federal agency coordination and communication on public lands usage must therefore be approached with equity in mind. We therefore urge you to include provisions directing FICOR to focus on bringing equity in the use, access, and opportunities for underserved communities and public lands.