

Ranking Member Neguse Opening Statement
Subcommittee on Federal Lands
Legislative Hearing on Six Bills
July 9, 2024

- Thank you, Chairman Tiffany.
- Good morning, everyone. It's good to be back after the July 4th holiday last week.
- The bills on today's agenda once again serve as a reminder of the wide range of benefits and uses associated with our parks and public lands – and the work that we can get done under this subcommittee.
- It is imperative that we continue to identify new places worthy of recognition, while bolstering our protection of those that have already been identified.
- As members of the Federal Lands Subcommittee, we collectively have the opportunity to champion new conservation opportunities—something I was proud to lead when I served as Chair of this Subcommittee, and continue to advocate for today.
- Some of the bills on our agenda today serve as a way for us to recognize the historical and diverse stories across our nation, and I'm looking forward to hearing more about these bills.
- This hearing continues a promising trend of considering more conservation and commemorative bills. As we have heard in our last two subcommittee hearings, there are still plenty of places throughout the country that deserve increased protection and conservation.

- But I would also like to remind my friends across the aisle that there is a long running list of additional bills - sponsored by members of both parties – to create new national parks, designate new wilderness and withdrawals, and protect some of the most special places across our great nation.
- This includes my CORE Act, which I’ve talked about many times in this Subcommittee, and so many more.
- Our constituents support real conservation, enhanced recreational opportunities, and even ways to accelerate tribal co-stewardship and enhance protections for sacred sites.
- Two of the bills that we are considering today have already received legislative hearings, been marked up, and advanced unanimously through the Energy and Commerce Committee.
- H.R. 3283 and H.R. 3299 both seek to promote accessibility and transparency in the permitting process for locating or modifying various types of communications or broadband equipment and infrastructure on public lands.
- There is significant support from both sides of the aisle for these bills and increasing the deployment of broadband across public lands.
- There are many other pieces of legislation that are still waiting for a hearing and consideration by our Subcommittee.
- For example, one of the bills we are considering today is the Jackie Robinson Commemorative Site Act.
- I know the Park Service has expressed concerns with commemorative site designations because they do not include any direct federal management or other nexus, and while this bill only

scratches the surface of the long list of bills we need to consider by the end of the year, I still think it represents a good start.

- This bill would continue to bolster the Robinson legacy in the world of professional baseball and beyond, and I appreciate the entirety of the Florida delegation for bringing the history of the stadium in Daytona to the Federal Lands Subcommittee so we can learn more about the best way to achieve this goal.
- Also on the agenda is H.R. 5401 to authorize a one-time grant from the Department of Homeland Security to the 9/11 Memorial and Museum in New York City to assist with operations, security, and maintenance of the facilities.
- The 9/11 Memorial and Museum is the principal tribute of remembrance and honor of the nearly 3,000 people killed in the terror attacks at the World Trade Center in 2001 and the six killed in the World Trade Center bombing in February of 1993.
- I look forward to hearing more about this initiative and would like to encourage cooperation among all interested parties in the continued operation of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum. To that end, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a letter from a coalition of interfaith organizations with constructive recommendations for this bill moving forward.
- Next, we have Representative Carbajal's Fire Safe Electric Corridors Act, which would allow for the removal of hazardous trees near power lines without requiring a timber sale.
- As Co-Chair of the Wildfire Caucus, I am pleased to see this bill on our agenda as there is much to be done to improve our wildfire preparedness and mitigation, and I am excited to work with Representative Carbajal on this initiative.

- And last, but certainly not least, H.R. 7976 from my colleague and friend Representative Holmes Norton would designate the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park.
- Washington, D.C. served as the Union's capital during the American Civil War and dozens of sites in the area are currently managed by the National Park Service – but not given the full recognition that a unified National Historical Park would bring.
- I look forward to hearing from the Congresswoman about the history and significance of these sites.
- I'd like to close by repeating my message from earlier in my opening statement. We need to be listening to our constituents and hearing bills that are important to them, and I hope the Chairman will work with me to ensure we are also taking up bills to protect and conserve our nation's public lands.
- We still have a lot of work to do, and only six months left to do it—but I look forward to working to get this done.
- With that Mr. Chairman, I yield back.