

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS, CONCERNING H.R. 9528, TO REDESIGNATE CERTAIN FACILITIES AT PATERSON GREAT FALLS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK IN HONOR OF CONGRESSMAN BILL PASCRELL, JR.**

**November 19, 2024**

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Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 9528, to redesignate certain facilities at Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park in honor of Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr.

H.R. 9528 would redesignate the Great Falls Scenic Overlook Trail Bridge and Overlook Park at Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park as the “Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. Scenic Overlook Trail Bridge” and “Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. Overlook Park” respectively.

The Great Falls of the Passaic River, with its natural chasm and 77-foot waterfall, provides an extraordinary scenic and geologic resource in the midst of an industrialized city and opportunities for relaxation, contemplation, and inspiration. Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park and the associated national historic landmark district provide one of the best opportunities to view a complete hydropower system from its source above the Great Falls of the Passaic River to its transformation into power for the mills and the surrounding community.

Overlook Park is an approximately 2.5-acre natural and cultural landscape that serves as the primary destination for visitors to park, offering views of the Great Falls and orientation to the national historical park. The Scenic Overlook Trail Bridge is one of two year-round pedestrian footbridges that serve approximately 300,000 visitors per year and are on the primary walking route from the park visitor center across the Passaic River to the viewing platform over the Great Falls at Overlook Park.

Representative Pascrell, a former high school teacher and college professor and lifelong resident of Paterson, worked tirelessly over many years to seek formal designation of Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park to ensure its protection and interpretation for future generations of Americans. After sponsoring the legislation to establish the park, which was enacted in 2009, Representative Pascrell continued to be a champion for the park’s successful operation and development.

The NPS generally discourages the naming of park features except when there is a compelling justification and at least five years have elapsed since the death of the person. However, we recognize that Congress may also specifically authorize the placement of such recognition. In this instance, the Department defers to Congress and does not object to H.R. 9528.

If the Committee moves forward with this bill, we recommend amending it to omit the title “Congressman” from the proposed name for the facilities, using only “Bill Pascrell, Jr.”. Customarily, park facilities that are named in honor of a person do not include the person’s title.

Chairman Tiffany, this concludes our statement.