United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

OCT 23 2026

The Honorable Tom Tiffany
Chairman
Subcommittee on Federal Lands
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Tiffany:

Enclosed are responses to questions for the record submitted to the Department's witness, Mike Caldwell, Associate Director, National Park Service, following his appearance before your Subcommittee at the September 18, 2025, legislative hearing. These responses were prepared by the National Park Service.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to you on this matter.

Sincerely,

Pamela L. Barkin
Legislative Counsel
Office of Congressional and
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Joe Neguse
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Federal Lands

Questions for the Record
House Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Federal Lands
Legislative Hearing
September 18, 2025

Questions from Ranking Member Huffman

Question 1: There are significant concerns about the ongoing implementation of Secretarial Order 3431, "Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History", and the review, alteration, and removal of interpretive materials, historic exhibits, and scientific content within the National Park System. What are the specific criteria being used to determine which content should be removed or changed?

a. **Please provide a comprehensive list of every exhibit, photograph, or interpretive material that has been removed or altered from any national park or historic site since the implementation of this Secretarial Order. For each item, please specify the location, the date of its removal or alteration, and the rationale provided by the team or individual responsible.**

Response: The National Park Service (NPS) is implementing Secretary's Order (S.O.) 3431 utilizing the criteria set forth in Section 5b of the Order. The review of content submitted by parks is ongoing. Parks receive notifications when determinations are made.

Question 2: During the hearing, Associate Director Caldwell referenced a "separate process" and a "separate team" working on the implementation of the Secretarial Order. What is the specific authority of this team, and how is its work overseen and documented? Please provide a full list of the individuals on this team, their official titles, including their chain of command.

Response: Consistent with Executive Order (E.O.) 14253, the Secretary of the Interior directed the heads of NPS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Bureau of Reclamation, and the relevant Assistant Secretaries, to implement the directives laid out in E.O. 14253 and Section 5 of S.O. 3431.

Question 3: Regarding the specific incident at Fort Pulaski National Monument and the removal of the photograph known as 'Scourged Back", was this removal a direct result of a specific directive, or was it a misinterpretation of a broader order? What steps are being taken to review this specific action? Please provide a detailed account of the events leading to the removal of the photograph of the formerly enslaved man with a scarred back.

Response: The photograph in question has not been removed from Fort Pulaski National Monument.

Question 4: How does the National Park Service's current effort to re-evaluate interpretive materials align with its long-standing mission to preserve and present a complete and honest history of the American experience, including challenging topics such as slavery and other forms of oppression? Specifically, how does the implementation of Secretarial Order 3431 comply with the National Park Service's Management Policies 2006?

Response: Any actions taken pursuant to S.O. 3431 will be executed within applicable law and policy.

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Question from Representative Fulcher

Question: In 2024, the National Park Service reported 331.9 million recreational visits. Given the number of visits to National Parks every year, how could updating the guidance on America the Beautiful passes to include two motorcycles create a smoother entrance process?

Response: The Department's National Park Service (NPS) welcomes more than 300 million recreational visits to units of the National Park System annually and efficient entry processes are essential to ensuring a positive visitor experience. On November 25, 2025, the NPS expanded affordability and access for motorcycle riders. All America the Beautiful interagency passes now cover two motorcycles per pass, making National Park adventures more accessible for riders, couples, families, and travel companions who travel on separate motorcycles.

This policy update simplifies operations at entrance stations by reducing the need for additional transactions or clarifications when multiple riders arrive together. It also helps streamline visitor flow, minimize congestion at busy entrance gates, and ensure consistent treatment of passholders regardless of their mode of travel. Importantly, this change aligns with the Department's broader goals of improving visitor services, modernizing fee collection processes, and reducing administrative burden for visitors and frontline staff. By updating motorcycle pass coverage, NPS is supporting smoother, more efficient access for millions of visitors each year.