

The Honorable Tom Tiffany
Chairman
Subcommittee on Federal Lands
House Committee on Natural Resources

July 1, 2026

The Honorable Joe Neguse
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Federal Lands
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce, the most significant, organized business community in Macon-Bibb County, Georgia, collaborates with other economic agencies to represent the vibrant community and economic interests of our Central Georgia region. On behalf of our nearly 800 invested businesses and governing board, we are writing this letter to express our strong support for the passage of legislation to designate the Ocmulgee Mounds as Ocmulgee National Park. This initiative, culminating from nearly a century of advocacy, presents a historic opportunity to boost economic development, preserve our nation's heritage, and protect our natural environment for future generations. We are committed to realizing the vision of America's next National Park and urge your support to make it a reality.

The passage of this legislation will create instant economic impact to Central Georgia, stretching from its urban gateway in Macon-Bibb County, Georgia, through neighboring, rural Twiggs County, to the Houston County border of Robins Air Force Base, the largest single-site industrial complex in Georgia.

The economic impact of the park and preserve cannot be overstated. A study conducted by the National Parks Conservation Association estimates that the proposed National Park and Preserve will have a tremendous economic impact along the corridor, which includes these three Georgia counties. The study estimates that over the course of 15 years the region's municipalities can expect a collective increase in tax revenue annually of \$29.8 Million because of the projected \$206.7 Million of total economic activity generated from Ocmulgee National Park.

The impact and resulting expenditures will spur entrepreneurship, create jobs and transform underserved areas of rural economies.

This legislation is diverse and inclusive. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation has been in consultation with the National Historical Park for years due to the significance of the ancestral sites inside the proposed boundary. The Nation remains landowners in the corridor, and we honor their long-standing commitment to the stewardship of the corridor. As common, inclusive practices of co-management at other units around the country, this National Park legislation would create a partnership centered on native lands like no other.

The Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce, as well as other local economic development agencies have met and will continue meet with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's economic development team, including the Nation's Secretary of Commerce and director of supplier diversity initiatives, to generate business investment, bridge workforce gaps and collaborate on strategic economic initiatives catalyzed by National Park status.

Robins Air Force Base (RAFB) will benefit from this legislation. The Ocmulgee National Park will potentially offer a quality of life increase for the communities housed on Robins Air Force Base, as well as a workforce of almost 24,000 civilians, contractors and military members who live in the region. It will also allow partners to put land along the Ocmulgee flood plain near the base into conservation, helping stave off encroachment into flight pattern areas. Future development in the areas east of the Base is important to protect against incompatible land use. Conserving undeveloped lands within the Ocmulgee River Corridor will help the Base continue to fulfill our national security missions, which is vital to the economic vitality of the entire Central Georgia region.

The Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce supports the creation of Ocmulgee National Park. Every year that goes by without action, we risk future development, lost cultural sites and missed opportunities for significant economic development in Central Georgia. As a region and partnership, we have been preparing for this moment and are ready to rise to the challenge and great privilege of being home to one of America's greatest treasures, our country's next National Park.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this vital issue. We look forward to your support and to welcoming a new chapter of conservation and prosperity in Central Georgia.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Jessica Walden'.

Jessica Walden
President & CEO, Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Chrissy Miner'.

Chrissy Miner
Chair, Government and Military Affairs, Greater Macon Chamber Board of Directors