

Committee on Natural Resources

Rob Bishop Chairman
Markup Memorandum

August 31, 2018

To: All Natural Resources Committee Members

From: Majority Committee Staff— Terry Camp and Holly Baker
Subcommittee on Federal Lands (x6-7736)

Mark-Up: **S. 2857 (Sen. Maria Cantwell)**, A bill to designate the Nordic Museum in Seattle, Washington, as the “National Nordic Museum,” and for other purposes
September 5, 2018, 10:15 am; 1324 Longworth House Office Building

S. 2857, “National Nordic Museum Act”

Summary of the Bill

The National Nordic Museum Act, S. 2857, introduced by Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA), officially designates the Nordic Museum in Seattle, Washington, as the National Nordic Museum.

Background

From the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries, about 2.5 million people immigrated to the United States from the five Nordic nations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.¹ They came to find new homes and livelihoods in the United States as they were seeking religious freedom and available farmland after experiencing repeated crop failures and religious persecution in their native lands.² They settled primarily in the Midwest, with many eventually moving to the Pacific Northwest. Today, many millions of Americans trace their ancestry to the Nordic countries.³

Founded in 1980, the Nordic Museum in Seattle, Washington is the only museum in the United States dedicated to the history, culture, and art of all five Nordic nations. The Museum highlights Nordic-American contributions in the United States and collects, preserves, and educates visitors about Nordic history, art, and cultural traditions.⁴

¹ “Scandinavian Immigration.” Harvard University Library Open Collections Program. *Immigration to the United States 1789-1930*. <http://ocp.hul.harvard.edu/immigration/scandinavian.html>

² “Immigration... Scandinavian.” Library of Congress. Classroom Materials for Teachers. <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/immigration/scandinavian.html>

³ United States Census 2010. “Total Ancestry Reported.” American Community Survey. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_10_5YR_B04003&prodType=table

⁴ “About Us.” Nordic Museum website. <http://nordicmuseum.org/about>

The Museum has been a mainstay of Ballard, a Seattle neighborhood built by Nordic immigrants, since its inception. The Museum's new 57,000 square-foot facility opened on May 5, 2018, with contributions from the City of Seattle, King County, the State of Washington, the Nordic Council (composed of representatives from the national parliaments of Nordic countries), the national museums of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, as well as many private individuals and foundations.⁵

S. 2857 will officially designate the Nordic Museum in Seattle, Washington, as the National Nordic Museum. The Museum will not be a unit of, or affiliated with, the National Park System. The designation will not require federal funds to be expended for any purpose related to the Museum.

On June 6, 2018, the Senate passed S. 2857 by voice vote.

Cost

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that enacting S. 2857 would have no significant effect on the federal budget, would not affect direct spending or revenues, and would not increase net direct spending.⁶

Administration Position

The Administration's position is currently unknown.

Effect on Current Law (Ramseyer)

None.

⁵ "The New Nordic Museum." Nordic Museum website. <http://nordicmuseum.org/future>

⁶ "Cost and Budgetary Considerations." Senate Report 115-303 to accompany S. 2857. Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. July 16, 2018.