



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
**NATURAL RESOURCES**  
CHAIRMAN BRUCE WESTERMAN

**To:** Subcommittee on Federal Lands Republican Members  
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**Date:** Monday, March 16, 2026  
**Subject:** Legislative Hearing on 6 Bills

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The Subcommittee on Federal Lands will hold a legislative hearing on 6 bills: H.R. 3286 (Rep. Guthrie), “*Mammoth Cave National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2025*”; H.R. 4290 (Rep. Vasquez), “*Downwinder Commemoration Act of 2025*”; H.R. 4716 (Rep. Owens), To transfer administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal land in Saratoga Springs, Utah, from the Secretary of the Interior to the United States Postal Service for construction of a post office, and for other purposes; H.R. 5555 (Rep. Panetta), “*Monterey Bay National Heritage Area Study Act*”; H.R. 6062 (Rep. Moore of WV), To transfer administrative jurisdiction over certain parcels of federal land in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, and for other purposes; and H.R. 7031 (Rep. Fulcher), “*Making National Parks Safer Act*”.

The hearing will take place on **Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.**, in room 1324 Longworth House Office Building.

Member offices are requested to notify Will Rodriguez ([Will.Rodriguez@mail.house.gov](mailto:Will.Rodriguez@mail.house.gov)) by 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, if their Member intends to participate in the hearing.

## **I. KEY MESSAGES**

- H.R. 3286, sponsored by Representative Guthrie, has significant local support and would add two new caves to Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky.
- Two bills, sponsored by Representatives Owens and Moore of West Virginia, authorize administrative jurisdiction transfers to reduce administrative burdens, improve federal land management, and meet local community needs.
- Representative Fulcher’s H.R. 7031 protects public safety by assisting with the transition to Next Generation 9–1–1 systems in our national parks, facilitating improved emergency response and interoperability across the National Park System.

## II. WITNESSES

### Panel I (Members of Congress):

- *To Be Announced*

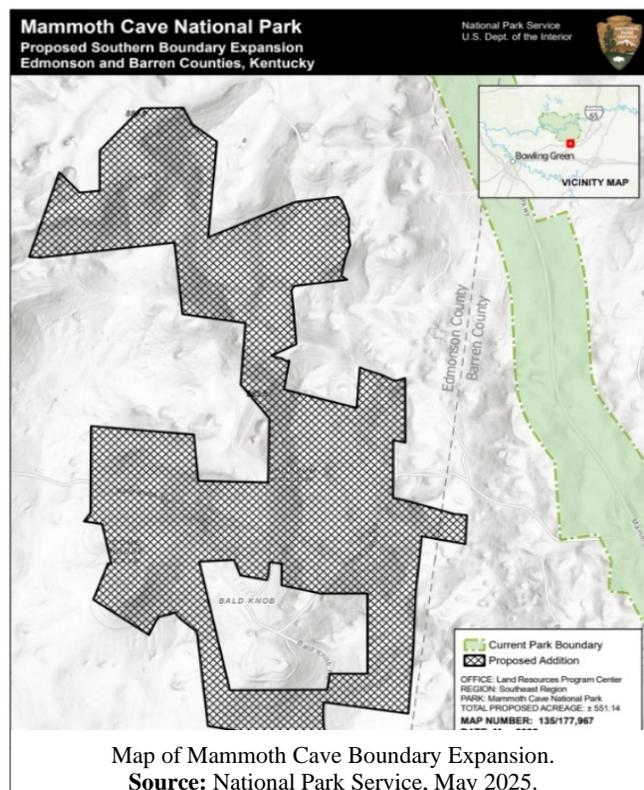
### Panel II (Outside Experts):

- **The Honorable Ronald Scott Lindsey**, Judge/Executive, Edmonson County, Smiths Grove, KY [*H.R. 3286*]
- **Mr. Christopher Carn**, Mayor, Saratoga Springs, UT [*H.R. 4716*]
- **Ms. Lee Ann Magoski**, President, National Emergency Number Association, Petaluma, CA [*H.R. 7031*]
- **Ms. Tina Cordova**, Co-Founder, Tularosa Basin Downwinders Consortium, Albuquerque, NM [*H.R. 4290*] [*Minority Witness*]
- **Ms. Lavera Alexander**, Chief Growth Officer, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, Marina, CA [*H.R. 5555*] [*Minority Witness*]

## III. BACKGROUND

### [H.R. 3286 \(Rep. Guthrie\), “Mammoth Cave National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2025”](#)

Established in 1941, Mammoth Cave National Park (Mammoth Cave) conserves the world’s longest known cave system and one of its most significant karst landscapes.<sup>1</sup> With more than 400 miles of surveyed passages, this cave system has been used by humans for thousands of years, including by Native Americans, who mined minerals and left extensive archeological evidence.<sup>2</sup> Over the past two centuries, Mammoth Cave has played a central role in American scientific discovery, archeology, and cultural history, and today is recognized as both a UNESCO World Heritage Site (1981) and a UNESCO



Map of Mammoth Cave Boundary Expansion.  
**Source:** National Park Service, May 2025.

<sup>1</sup> “Mammoth Cave National Park,” National Park Service, 2026, <https://www.nps.gov/macaindex.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> “Native Americans,” National Park Service, 2026, <https://www.nps.gov/macaindex/learn/historyculture/native-americans.htm>.

Biosphere Reserve (1990).<sup>3</sup> Additionally, Mammoth Cave’s cave system provides habitat for several species of bats, which depend on large, stable cave hibernation sites to survive.<sup>4</sup> Mammoth Cave is also a major tourist attraction and economic driver for south-central Kentucky.<sup>5</sup> In 2024, Mammoth Cave’s 747,042 visitors spent approximately \$73.2 million in nearby gateway communities.<sup>6</sup>

H.R. 3286, sponsored by Representative Brett Guthrie (R-KY-02), authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire approximately 551.14 acres of land in Edmonson and Barren Counties, Kentucky, for inclusion in Mammoth Cave. This property includes Coach Cave and James Cave, along with surrounding forested and karst terrain that contributes to watershed protection and cave system integrity. Both caves serve as important habitats for Indiana and gray bats, with each cave containing approximately 150,000 to 200,000 of the latter species.<sup>7</sup> The property also contains significant cultural resources, including prehistoric petroglyphs, evidence of Native mineral extraction, and historic artifacts associated with War of 1812-era saltpeter mining and Civil War-era exploration.<sup>8</sup> This bipartisan legislation is being led by Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) in the U.S. Senate.<sup>9</sup>

### **H.R. 4290 (Rep. Vasquez), “Downwinder Commemoration Act of 2025”**

On July 16, 1945, the U.S. government conducted the Trinity Test near Alamogordo, New Mexico, detonating the world’s first atomic bomb.<sup>10</sup> Residents living in surrounding communities, often referred to as “Downwinders,” “were not warned or evacuated” prior to the test and, as a result, were exposed to radioactive fallout.<sup>11</sup> In the decades that followed, these communities experienced elevated rates of serious health conditions, including cancer and other long-term illnesses, which many residents and advocates attribute to radiation exposure.<sup>12</sup> 2025 marked the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Trinity Test, which focused further attention on the test’s harmful effects, including the legacy of the communities affected by radioactive fallout.

H.R. 4290 directs the Secretaries of the Army, Air Force, and the Interior to jointly obtain three honorific plaques commemorating the Downwinder communities of New Mexico. The plaques must be placed at White Sands Missile Range, Holloman Air Force Base, and White Sands National Park. The plaques would provide permanent, visible recognition of the communities

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<sup>3</sup> “Science and Research at Mammoth Cave National Park,” National Park Service, 2026, <https://www.nps.gov/macal/learn/scienceresearch.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> “Bats in Mammoth Cave,” National Park Service, 2026, <https://www.nps.gov/macal/learn/nature/bats.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> Molly Schroer, “Tourism to Mammoth Cave National Park contributes \$73,238,000 to local economy,” National Park Service, September 29, 2025, [https://www.nps.gov/macal/learn/news/tourism-to-mammoth-cave-national-park-contributes-\\$73-238-000-to-local-economy.htm](https://www.nps.gov/macal/learn/news/tourism-to-mammoth-cave-national-park-contributes-$73-238-000-to-local-economy.htm).

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> S. Rept. 118-134, “Mammoth Cave National Park Boundary Adjustment Act,” <https://www.congress.gov/index.php/committee-report/118th-congress/senate-report/134/1>; Statement for the Record Before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Concerning S. 5129, National Park Service, December 1, 2022, available at <https://www.doi.gov/oc/s-5129>.

<sup>8</sup> “A Vision for Endangered Species Recovery and Cultural Heritage Preservation: The Nature Conservancy’s Coach and James Cave Project”, The Nature Conservancy, on file with the Committee.

<sup>9</sup> S. 1674, 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/1674>.

<sup>10</sup> Megan Kamerick, “Downwinder says Trinity commemorations will feel different with RECA expansion,” KUNM, July 11, 2025, <https://www.kunm.org/local-news/2025-07-11/downwinder-says-trinity-commemorations-will-feel-different-with-reca-expansion>.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

affected by the Trinity Test and commemorate the historical and military significance of the nation’s nuclear weapons program.

**H.R. 4716 (Rep. Owens), To transfer administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal land in Saratoga Springs, Utah, from the Secretary of the Interior to the United States Postal Service for construction of a post office, and for other purposes.**

Saratoga Springs, Utah, is a rapidly growing community with a population approaching 60,000 residents.<sup>13</sup> Despite its increasing population, Saratoga Springs still lacks its own dedicated post office to serve the town’s residents.<sup>14</sup> Instead, Saratoga Springs, Eagle Mountain, and surrounding communities must rely on a single post office located in Lehi, Utah, for service.<sup>15</sup> This means that more than 200,000 residents depend on one facility that was not designed or equipped to handle the current volume of operations.<sup>16</sup> Local officials and residents report that this strain contributes to delayed deliveries, lost mail, and extended delivery times, including delays before mail even reaches the communities where delivery routes begin.<sup>17</sup>

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) conducted an internal space constraint study in 2023, which concluded that a new facility is needed to address these service challenges.<sup>18</sup> Despite several years of engagement by local leaders, no viable options for the new facility appeared on the market.<sup>19</sup>

Accordingly, H.R. 4716, introduced by Representative Burgess Owens (R-UT-04), transfers administrative jurisdiction over approximately 20.32 acres of federal land in Saratoga Springs from the Secretary of the Interior to USPS for use as a postal facility. The bill directs USPS to construct the post office and begin operations within two years of enactment. The measure provides for a federal-to-federal land transfer and does not include appropriations to construct



Legislative map for H.R. 4716.  
Source: Bureau of Land Management, 2024.

<sup>13</sup> “Growth & Demographics,” Saratoga Springs City Government, 2026, <https://www.saratogasprings-ut.gov/455/Growth-Demographics>.

<sup>14</sup> “USPS asked to add Saratoga Springs Post Office,” Eagle Mountain City Government, July 28, 2025, <https://eaglemountain.gov/usps-asked-to-add-saratoga-springs-post-office/>.

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> “QuickFacts, Saratoga Springs city, Utah; Lehi city, Utah; Eagle Mountain city, Utah,” U.S. Census Bureau, 2024, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/saratogaspringscityutah,lehicityutah,eaglemountainticityutah/PST045224>.

<sup>17</sup> Information provided by the U.S. Postal Service.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

the facility. Because the land in question is already federally owned, this bill does not add to the federal estate. The transfer will enable USPS to address a long-standing concern within the Saratoga Springs community, improve service reliability, and reduce operational strain on the existing Lehi USPS facility.

### **H.R. 5555 (Rep. Panetta), “Monterey Bay National Heritage Area Study Act”**

The Monterey Bay region along California’s Central Coast is home to some of the nation’s most significant natural, marine, and cultural resources.<sup>20</sup> From historic missions and quaint beach towns to “Big Sur’s dramatic cliffs and redwood forests,” the Monterey Bay region offers abundant tourism opportunities.<sup>21</sup> This area also contains numerous shipwrecks, extensive kelp forests, and one of North America’s largest deep-sea canyons, in addition to dozens of sites associated with centuries of maritime exploration and coastal settlement.<sup>22</sup>

Since 1984, Congress has established 61 NHAs to recognize and support the conservation and interpretation of significant natural, historic, scenic, and cultural landscapes.<sup>23</sup> NHAs operate as public-private partnerships led by local and state entities, with the National Park Service (NPS) providing federal recognition, limited funding, and technical assistance.<sup>24</sup> Unlike units of the National Park System, lands within NHAs generally remain in non-federal ownership and are not managed by NPS.<sup>25</sup>

H.R. 5555 directs the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study assessing the suitability and feasibility of designating the Monterey Bay region as a National Heritage Area (NHA). This legislation does not establish a new NHA; doing so would require Congress to pass separate legislation after the study’s completion.

### **H.R. 6062 (Rep. Moore of WV), To transfer administrative jurisdiction over certain parcels of federal land in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, and for other purposes.**

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park (Harpers Ferry) in West Virginia is comprised of 3,682 acres of land and contains 206 historic structures.<sup>26</sup> It sits at the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers, offering abundant outdoor recreation opportunities, including climbing,

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<sup>20</sup> “About Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary,” National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2026, <https://montereybay.noaa.gov/intro/>.

<sup>21</sup> “Monterey Bay Region,” Central Coast California, <https://www.centralcoast-tourism.com/monterey-region>.

<sup>22</sup> *Id.*

<sup>23</sup> Mark DeSantis, “National Heritage Areas: Background and Issues for Congress,” Congressional Research Service, April 17, 2023, <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/RL33462>.

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> “Harpers Ferry by the Numbers,” National Park Service, 2026, <https://home.nps.gov/hafe/learn/news/harpers-ferry-by-the-numbers.htm>.

hiking, biking, and fishing.<sup>27</sup> Harpers Ferry also contains unique historic properties and landscapes, including those associated with the 1862 Battle of Harpers Ferry like the Schoolhouse Ridge Area, which played a central role in Civil War-era military operations.<sup>28</sup> Within the Schoolhouse Ridge Area, Harpers Ferry is interspersed with property administered by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), which operates the nearby Advanced Training Center (ATC).<sup>29</sup>



Depiction of administrative jurisdiction transfer authorized by H.R. 6062.  
**Source:** The WV Independent Observer (based on 2021 NPS map).

For more than a decade, NPS and CBP pursued a coordinated plan to realign administrative boundaries in Harpers Ferry to better support both historic battlefield protection and CBP needs.<sup>30</sup> Under this plan, approximately 71.51 acres of land currently administered by CBP would be transferred to NPS and incorporated into Harpers Ferry, filling gaps along the Schoolhouse Ridge landscape and improving access, stewardship, and resource protection. In exchange, approximately 25 acres of land currently administered by NPS, located south of the existing ATC facility, would be transferred to CBP for use in the ATC.<sup>31</sup>

H.R. 6062, sponsored by Representative Riley Moore (R-WV-02), would facilitate the implementation of this plan by transferring administrative jurisdiction over the respective parcels between NPS and CBP and adjusting the boundaries of Harpers Ferry accordingly. This legislation is supported by the entire West Virginia Congressional delegation.<sup>32</sup>

### **H.R. 7031 (Rep. Fulcher), “Making National Parks Safer Act”**

NPS manages 85 million acres of land across the country, comprised of 433 individual units.<sup>33</sup> The National Park System recorded nearly 322 million visits in 2024, and as visitation soars, so does the number of emergencies requiring first-responder assistance.<sup>34</sup> For example, every year, thousands of visitors to federal lands require search-and-rescue services, often in remote, rugged areas with limited connectivity.<sup>35</sup> Today, NPS operates 41 call centers across the nation, mainly

<sup>27</sup> “Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Things to Do,” National Park Service, 2026, <https://www.nps.gov/hafe/planyourvisit/things2do.htm>.

<sup>28</sup> “School House Ridge North Cultural Landscape,” National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/school-house-ridge-north-975428.htm#4/31.84/-78.09>.

<sup>29</sup> Steve Pearson, “Federal Agencies Plan To Exchange Land In Harpers Ferry,” The West Virginia Independent Observer, November 19, 2025, <https://observerwv.com/land-swap-plans-for-harpers-ferry-park-and-customs-border-protection/>.

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

<sup>31</sup> *Id.*

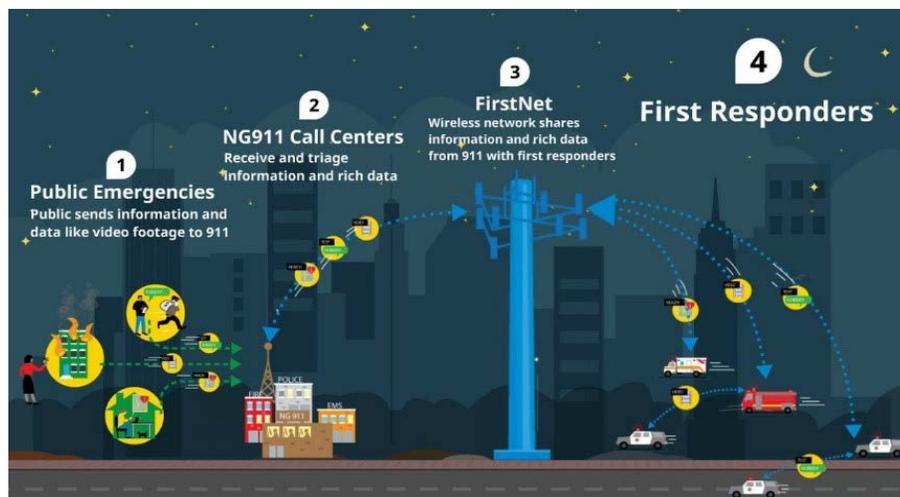
<sup>32</sup> H.R. 6062 and S. 2280, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/2280/cosponsors>.

<sup>33</sup> “National Park System”, National Park Service, 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/national-park-system.htm>.

<sup>34</sup> “Visitor Use Data,” National Park Service, 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/visitor-use-statistics-dashboard.htm>.

<sup>35</sup> Mark DeSantis, “Search and Rescue (SAR) Operations on Federal Lands,” Congressional Research Service, May 7, 2024, <https://crs.gov/Reports/IF12020?source=search>.

in larger parks, while other locations work with local communities to provide emergency responders through their dispatch services.<sup>36</sup> However, NPS's call centers "operate on outdated systems and have little interoperability and emergency redundancy capabilities with other law enforcement agencies."<sup>37</sup>



How Next Generation 9-1-1 Systems operate.

Source: State of Oregon, no date.

In 2024, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted rules to require service providers to transition to the Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) system.<sup>38</sup> NG911 is a fully digitized emergency communications system that operates on a secure, cloud-based network rather than traditional analog 911 systems.<sup>39</sup> Instead of relying solely on phone calls for information, first responders using NG911 can receive text messages, photos, and live videos, which analog systems often lack.<sup>40</sup> These capabilities provide better interoperability, improved security, and more effective and efficient emergency responses by enabling "emergency communications centers to receive, process, and analyze all types of 911 requests."<sup>41</sup> This functionality is especially critical in national parks, where NG911 can help overcome spotty connections by transferring text messages or pictures to first responders, who can use this information to identify visitors in need of assistance across large swaths of terrain. Despite the clear benefits to NPS, a 2024 Government Accountability Office report found that NPS "did not plan to implement NG911" nationwide, with only a few units having implemented the technology.<sup>42</sup>

H.R. 7031, introduced by Representative Russ Fulcher (R-ID-01), fills this technology gap by directing the Secretary of the Interior to complete an assessment of emergency communications centers in NPS units to determine (1) the status of NG911 implementation and (2) the estimated costs to purchase, maintain, and operate these systems. After submitting the assessment, the Secretary of the Interior is required to develop a plan to install NG911 systems across the National Park System, working in consultation with federal, state, and local emergency operations officials. By strengthening emergency response capabilities in situations where

<sup>36</sup> "Making National Parks Safer Act clears Congressional Hurdle," KPAX News 8, February 6, 2026, <https://www.kpax.com/news/national-news/making-national-parks-safer-act-clears-congressional-hurdle>.

<sup>37</sup> *Id.*

<sup>38</sup> "Next Generation 911 Services," Federal Communications Commission, <https://www.fcc.gov/policy-and-licensing-division/911-services/NG911>.

<sup>39</sup> *Id.*

<sup>40</sup> *Id.*

<sup>41</sup> *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> "Next Generation 911: Some Federal Agencies Have Begun Planning, but Few Have Upgraded their Call Centers," Government Accountability Office, September 2024, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-24-106783.pdf>.

seconds matter, the bill would allow Americans to seek adventure at our national parks with confidence that their safety is being protected.

#### **IV. MAJOR PROVISIONS & SECTION-BY-SECTION**

##### **H.R. 3286 (Rep. Guthrie), “Mammoth Cave National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2025”**

###### **Section 2. Mammoth Cave National Park Boundary Modification.**

- Amends the Act of June 5, 1942 (Mammoth Cave’s enabling statute) to adjust the authorized appropriations for inflation.<sup>43</sup>
- Allows the Secretary of the Interior to acquire 551.14 acres of land, as depicted on the referenced map, to be added to Mammoth Cave.

##### **H.R. 4290 (Rep. Vasquez), “Downwinder Commemoration Act of 2025”**

###### **Section 2. Plaques Honoring Downwinder Communities of New Mexico.**

- Directs the Secretaries of the Army, Air Force, and the Interior to jointly obtain three honorific plaques to commemorate the Downwinder communities of New Mexico.
- Requires that an honorific plaque be placed at each of the following locations in New Mexico: White Sands Missile Range (Army plaque), Holloman Air Force Base (Air Force plaque), and White Sands National Park (Department of the Interior plaque).

##### **H.R. 4716 (Rep. Owens), To transfer administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal land in Saratoga Springs, Utah, from the Secretary of the Interior to the United States Postal Service for construction of a post office, and for other purposes.**

###### **Section 2. Transfer of Administrative Jurisdiction of Land to USPS; Construction of Post Office.**

- Transfers administrative jurisdiction of approximately 20.32 acres of land managed by the Bureau of Land Management in Saratoga Springs, Utah, to USPS for use as a USPS facility.
- Directs USPS to construct and begin operations of a post office in Saratoga Springs within two years of the date of enactment of the legislation.

##### **H.R. 5555 (Rep. Panetta), “Monterey Bay National Heritage Area Study Act”**

###### **Section 2. Study.**

- Directs the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating the Monterey Bay NHA in conjunction with State, Tribal, and local governments and non-profit organizations. The proposed study area would cover Monterey, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, and San Luis Obispo Counties in California, as well as any other areas with similar heritage characteristics or in the vicinity of the proposed study area.

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<sup>43</sup> 56 Stat. 319, chapter 341; 16 U.S.C. 404c-11.

- Requires the study to be conducted in accordance with the National Heritage Area Act.<sup>44</sup>

**H.R. 6062 (Rep. Moore of WV), To transfer administrative jurisdiction over certain parcels of federal land in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, and for other purposes.**

**Section 1. Transfer of Federal Land in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.**

- Transfers administrative jurisdiction of 25 acres of NPS land in Harpers Ferry to CBP to be used as a part of CBP's ATC. Excludes the acreage from Harpers Ferry, subject to a land survey.
- Transfers administrative jurisdiction of 71.51 acres of CBP land in Harpers Ferry to NPS to be administered as part of Harpers Ferry. Includes the acreage in Harpers Ferry, subject to a land survey.
- Does not allow for reimbursements or additional considerations for the transferred land.
- Stipulates that if the Commissioner of CBP no longer requires the land for CBP's ATC, jurisdiction will revert to NPS to be administered as part of Harpers Ferry.
- Waives the acreage limitation in Harpers Ferry's enabling statute to account for the administrative jurisdiction transfer.<sup>45</sup>

**H.R. 7031 (Rep. Fulcher), "Making National Parks Safer Act"**

**Section 3. Assessment of Emergency Communications Centers Located in Units of the National Park System.**

- Directs the Secretary of the Interior to complete an assessment, within one year of the bill's enactment, of emergency communications centers located in units of the National Park System to identify the implementation of NG911 systems and the estimated costs to purchase, maintain, and operate these systems across all units of the National Park System.
- Directs the Secretary of the Interior to publish the assessment and submit a report to Congress identifying issues that may affect the implementation of NG911 systems across all emergency communications centers in the National Park System.

**Section 4. Plan to Install Next Generation 9-1-1 Systems in Units of the National Park System.**

- Directs the Secretary of the Interior, within one year of the assessment's submission to Congress, to develop a plan based on the assessment's results to install NG911 systems throughout emergency communications centers in the National Park System.
- Requires the plan to be developed in consultation with other federal, state, and local government agencies.
- Clarifies that the plan will not be required in any NPS unit where NG911 systems are already installed.

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<sup>44</sup> 54 U.S.C. 120103(a).

<sup>45</sup> 16 U.S.C. 450bb(d).

## **V. COST**

A formal cost estimate from CBO is not yet available for any of the bills.

## **VI. ADMINISTRATION POSITION**

The Trump administration testified in support of Senate companion legislation to the “Making National Parks Safer Act” in December 2025.<sup>46</sup> The Trump administration’s position on the remaining bills is unknown at this time.

## **VII. EFFECT ON CURRENT LAW**

### **H.R. 3286**

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<sup>46</sup> Testimony of National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on National Parks, December 9, 2025, <https://www.doi.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2026-02/final-testimony-dec-9-senr-np-legislative-hearing-1.pdf>.