



December 5, 2016

Dear Representative,

We, the members of the National Parks Second Century Action Coalition, write to urge you to vote “yes” on H.R. 4680, the National Park Service Centennial Act, when it comes up for a suspension vote this week. The National Parks Second Century Action Coalition is made up of organizations supporting conservation, recreation, outdoor industry, travel and tourism and historic preservation that are dedicated to promoting the protection, restoration, and enjoyment of the National Park System for the long-term benefit it offers our nation.

With the National Park Service Centennial this year, now is the time to ensure our parks are ready for another 100 years of protecting our most treasured resources and nation’s history for the American people and international visitors. Every dollar invested in the National Park Service yields nearly \$10 in economic activity. In total, national parks support nearly \$32 billion in economic activity and more than a quarter million private-sector jobs annually.

The passage of the National Park Service Centennial Act would formally establish the Centennial Challenge Fund and an endowment to help address some of the financial needs of our nation’s parks. The Centennial Challenge is an innovative program that encourages private individuals, foundations, businesses and others to donate funds to help restore and improve our national parks by providing a federal match for the donations. Previous annual investments have supported valuable centennial projects throughout the country. Passage of this bill would formally establish this program and allow partners additional time and certainty to raise the matching funds. The endowment would provide long term financial support for the national parks by investing monetary gifts and other contributions to be used in the future for projects and activities that support the national parks.

H.R. 4680 also recognizes the importance of national parks as places of learning by enhancing interpretation and education programs, and provides additional opportunities for volunteers in our nation’s treasures. We also support the provisions that allow the National Park Service to recruit and hire more young and diverse Americans like veterans through the Public Lands Corps.

Passage of the National Park Service Centennial Act, coupled with additional investments for national park roads in the recently enacted Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and increased operation and construction funding in the FY17 appropriations bill, will set up our parks to be better prepared to serve another hundred years and beyond. These investments are certainly part of the solution to better funding our parks, but more must be done. The National Parks Second Action Coalition will continue to work with Congress to more directly address the nearly \$12 billion backlog in the near future.

Thank you for considering our views,

Alaska Geographic
American Forests
American Hiking Society
American Society of Landscape Architects
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Atomic Heritage Foundation
Big Bend Conservancy
Cabrillo National Monument Foundation
Coalition to Protect America's National Parks
Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park
The Corps Network
East Bay Regional Park District
Eastern National
Friends of Acadia
Friends of Saguaro National Park
Grand Canyon Association
Great Smoky Mountains Association
Los Amigos de Valles Caldera
Mount Rushmore Society
National Association for Interpretation
National Parks Conservation Association
National Tour Association
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Outdoor Industry Association
Public Lands Alliance
Rocky Mountain Conservancy
Southeast Tourism Society
St. Croix River Association
Student Conservation Association
United States Tour Operators Association
Voyageurs National Park Association
Washington's National Park Fund
Western National Parks Association
Western States Tourism Policy Council