

**STATEMENT OF PETER MAY, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 2489, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE ACQUISITION AND PROTECTION OF NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT BATTLEFIELDS AND ASSOCIATED SITES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR AND THE WAR OF 1812 UNDER THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD PROTECTION PROGRAM**

**January 24, 2012**

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 2489, to authorize the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 under the American Battlefield Protection Program.

The Department supports H.R. 2489. This legislation would expand the American Battlefield Protection Program to include both the War of 1812 and Revolutionary War battlefields in addition to Civil War battlefields, which are covered under the current program. It would authorize \$10 million in grants for Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefield sites, as well as \$10 million in grants for Civil War battlefield sites, for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2022. The American Battlefield Protection Program is currently authorized through fiscal 2013.

In March 2008, the National Park Service transmitted the *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 Sites in the United States*, which identified and determined the relative significance of sites related to the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The study assessed the short and long-term threats to the sites. Following the success of the 1993 *Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields*, this study similarly provides alternatives for the preservation and interpretation of the sites by Federal, State, and local governments or other public or private entities.

The direction from Congress for the study was the same as for a Civil War sites study of the early 1990s. As authorized by Congress, the National Park Service looked at sites and structures that are thematically tied with the nationally significant events that occurred during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The result was a more thorough survey of the remaining battlefields associated with our nation's initial struggle for independence and sovereignty that represents twice the field effort undertaken for the Civil War study.

Building upon this study, H.R. 2489 would create a matching grant program for Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 sites that closely mirrors a very successful matching grant program for Civil War sites. The Civil War acquisition grant program was first authorized by Congress in the Civil War Battlefield Protection Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-359), and was reauthorized through FY 2013 by the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-11). That grant fund has been tremendously successful in allowing local preservation efforts to permanently preserve Civil War battlefield land with a minimum of Federal assistance.

With the release of the *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 Sites in the United States*, communities interested in preserving their Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 sites can take the first steps similar to those taken by the Civil War advocates nearly two decades ago. If established, this new grant program can complement the existing grant program for Civil War battlefields and, in doing so, benefit the American people by providing for the preservation and protection of a greater number of sites from the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. All funds would be subject to NPS priorities and the availability of appropriations.

The NPS is currently finalizing its update to the 1993 Civil War Sites report, which reviews the conditions of 383 Civil War battlefields, and which we plan to transmit to Congress in 2012. As currently drafted, H.R. 2489 requires another update of the condition of these same Civil War battlefields in five years, in addition to an update of the 677 sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 identified in the 2007 report. The NPS feels that updating information for all of these sites, most of which are not within the National Park System itself, will not be feasible in five years. Therefore, the NPS suggests one change in the reporting language of the bill so that the reporting requirement for the Civil War update is “not later than 10 years after the date of enactment”.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony. I would be pleased to respond to any questions from you and members of the committee.

**STATEMENT OF PETER MAY, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 2240, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXCHANGE OF LAND OR INTEREST IN LAND BETWEEN LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND THE CITY OF LOWELL IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**January 24, 2012**

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Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 2240, a bill to authorize the exchange of land or interest in land between Lowell National Historical Park and the city of Lowell in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and for other purposes.

The Department supports enactment of this legislation. H.R. 2240 would enable Lowell National Historical Park to acquire land by means of exchange with public entities and to continue beyond 2018 the successful use of the Preservation Loan Fund to help finance the restoration and redevelopment of historic structures. Both of these provisions would facilitate the park's long-term goals without requiring any additional appropriations.

Public Law 95-290, enacted in 1978, established Lowell National Historical Park to preserve and interpret the city's nationally significant historical and cultural sites, structures, and districts associated with the city's role in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century American industrial revolution. Along with the park, the law established the Lowell Historic Preservation Commission to complement and coordinate the efforts of the park, the Commonwealth, and local and private entities in developing and managing the historic and cultural resources and to administer the Lowell Historic Preservation District. The law established an arrangement that requires a high level of cooperation between the Federal, Commonwealth, and local governments, and the private sector. The General Management Plan (GMP) and the Lowell Preservation Plan were designed to be supportive of local government preservation and community development efforts and to encourage substantial private investment in the redevelopment of the city's vast 19th-century urban resources.

Over the past three decades, the park and the commission have played a key role in the city's revitalization. Working in cooperation with the city, Commonwealth, and other public entities and private partners, the National Park Service has contributed to the rehabilitation of over 400 structures and the creation of extensive public programs to preserve and interpret the city's cultural resources. An estimated \$1 billion in private investment has occurred within the park and preservation district since the creation of the park. To date, 88 percent of the 5.2 million square feet of vacant mill space within the park and preservation district has been renovated or is in the process of being renovated in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Because of changes in the vicinity of the park as these preservation and redevelopment efforts have occurred, the National Park Service would like to shift the use, management, or ownership of some park lands in order to facilitate their redevelopment for other uses. The park's maintenance facility and visitor center parking lot sites, which are not historic, have been identified by the University of Massachusetts—Lowell, and the City of Lowell, respectively, as critical to their master plan redevelopment programs. The university and city seek to acquire these sites from the park, have proposed to develop them in ways consistent with the mission, intent and purposes of the park, and have expressed a willingness to work with the park to help facilitate the equitable exchange and relocation of these facilities. The park's September 2010 GMP Amendment specifically recommended the Visitor Center Parking Lot exchange with the city. The University's request to exchange the park's maintenance facility came after the GMP, but is in the park's long-term interest. The National Park Service supports the exchange of both the Visitor Center Parking Lot and the park's maintenance facility.

Under current law, the park has authority to acquire property from the Commonwealth or its political subdivisions only by donation. H.R. 2240 would give the park the authority to acquire land by exchange from the Commonwealth, the city of Lowell, or the University of Massachusetts Building Authority. This authority would enable the park to conduct both proposed land exchanges. The legislation ensures that if the value of land to be acquired by the park is lower than the value of the land exchanged, the city or Commonwealth would be required to make a cash payment to equalize values and the park would have use of those funds for the purpose of replacing exchanged facilities and infrastructure. At this time the National Park Service has not identified potential exchange properties.

The Preservation Loan Fund was also authorized in the Public Law 95-290 and formally established in 1983. The purpose of the fund is to stimulate private investment in nationally significant historic buildings to meet the historic preservation mandate within the Lowell National Historical Park and Preservation District. The law directed the commission to loan the funds to the non-profit Lowell Development and Financial Corporation, to create a revolving loan fund to accomplish historic preservation goals. The program has funded twenty-one nationally significant historic building projects with loans totaling approximately \$2.5 million. The original Federal appropriation of \$750,000 leveraged non-federal project investments totaling approximately \$130.3 million to date, representing over \$173 in non-federal investment for each Federal dollar appropriated.

The Preservation Loan Fund was initially authorized for a 35-year period expiring in 2018. H.R. 2240 would extend the program for an additional 25 years. The extension of the program would enable existing funds to continue in a revolving fund for the purposes identified in the original authorization. No additional appropriations would be needed. Despite what has been accomplished in Lowell, numerous historic structures still require rehabilitation, and this program is an important catalyst for generating the private and non-federal funding needed to ensure the preservation of these structures. Extending this authorization would greatly enhance the park's efforts to assure the integrity of the park and preservation district.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or members of the subcommittee may have regarding H.R. 2240.

**STATEMENT OF PETER MAY, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, LANDS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS OF THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE, CONCERNING H.R. 938, TO ESTABLISH A COMMISSION TO ENSURE A SUITABLE OBSERVANCE OF THE CENTENNIAL OF WORLD WAR I AND TO DESIGNATE MEMORIALS TO THE SERVICE OF MEN AND WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES IN WORLD WAR I.**

**January 24, 2012**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior (Department) regarding H.R. 938, a bill to establish a World War I Centennial Commission and to designate memorials to the service of men and women of the United States in World War I.

The Department appreciates the sponsors' recognition of the sacrifices of Americans who served in World War I. The Department shares the sponsors' sentiment on this subject and would like to continue working with Congress on appropriate ways to recognize that service. This is an important era in American history that has been honored through a number of monuments throughout the nation.

Unfortunately, there has been no study to determine which of the various World War I Memorials in the United States would be best suited to be named as the official National World War I Memorial, and the bill conflicts with the Commemorative Works Act (the Act), which was enacted to govern the establishment and placement of memorials in the Nation's Capital so as to protect existing memorials, open space and the historic vistas in this iconic area. For these reasons, the Department has serious concerns with H.R. 938 and we would like to work with the Committee to address our concerns.

The Department defers to the General Services Administration on the establishment of the World War I Centennial Commission as this responsibility would not fall under the purview of the National Park Service.

H.R. 938 would authorize the World War I Memorial Foundation (Foundation) to establish a commemorative work rededicating the existing District of Columbia War Memorial as the "District of Columbia and National World War I Memorial" by adding an appropriate sculptural or other commemorative element deemed appropriate to reflect the character of a national memorial.

The District of Columbia War Veterans Memorial (D.C. War Memorial) was authorized by Congress on June 7, 1924, to commemorate the citizens of the District of Columbia who served in World War I. The memorial was funded both by organizations and citizens of the District of Columbia. Construction of the memorial began in the spring of 1931 and it was dedicated by President Herbert Hoover on November 11, 1931. It was the first war memorial to be erected in

West Potomac Park and remains the only local District of Columbia memorial on the National Mall. The memorial is a contributing structure in East and West Potomac Parks entry in the National Register of Historic Places.

The memorial was designed by Washington architect Frederick H. Brooke, with Horace W. Peaslee and Nathan C. Wyeth as associate architects, and inscribed on the base of the Memorial are the names of the 499 District of Columbia citizens who lost their lives in the war. The Memorial was designed to be used as a bandstand and is large enough to hold an 80-member band. Concerts were held there until May 1, 1960. For many years, its visitors were likely those who were there to enjoy its peaceful and contemplative setting. Today, as a result of the recent and considerable investment of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, \$7.3 million, the memorial's original material, landscaping and character have been restored and rehabilitated and as announced at its re-dedication on Veteran's Day 2011, it will again be the focus of District of Columbia commemorative activities. And while this memorial is dedicated to District residents, there have long been several national World War I memorials in the District that are also located in the prime area known as the Reserve.

A national memorial to World War I veterans is located in Pershing Park, on Pennsylvania Avenue between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Avenues, in Washington, D.C. near the White House. This memorial, constructed by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation and the ABMC, includes a statue of General Pershing, as well as artwork detailing the major battles in World War I that involved U.S. troops. This commemorative work represents all who served in that conflict. Quotations on this existing World War I Memorial include General Pershing's tribute to the officers and men of the American Expeditionary Forces of World War I and a commemoration of those who served in the United States Navy in World War I. Veterans of World War I are also honored by the 1st Division and 2nd Division Memorials, also located near the White House.

Just a few blocks from these World War I memorials, H.R. 938 would effectively supplant the intent of the D.C. War Memorial's sponsors who lived through that war, the citizens and organizations of the District, who advocated for and funded this memorial to honor their family members, friends and neighbors who served and died in World War I. Superimposing another subject on an existing memorial, particularly if new features are added, is an encroachment prohibited by the Commemorative Works Act. Moreover, adding this new commemoration contradicts the Act's concept of the Reserve, which honors the National Mall as a completed work of civic art where no more memorials are to be placed. Section 8908 of the Act precludes the addition of new memorials in the Reserve, defined as the great cross-axis of the Mall, from the United States Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial, and the White House to the Jefferson Memorial.

In addition, H.R. 938 exempts this proposal from key provisions that are at the heart of the Commemorative Works Act. If a new memorial is proposed, Section 8905 of that Act requires the site and design for the new memorial be developed in a public process, first obtaining the advice of the NCMAC and then obtaining approvals by the National Capital Planning Commission and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts.

The site for the Liberty Memorial at the National World War I Museum, in Kansas City, Missouri, was dedicated in 1921. The ceremony was attended by over 200,000 people, including General John J. Pershing, General John J. Lejeune, Ferdinand Foch, Admiral David Beatty, and military leaders from Belgium, Italy, and Serbia. In 1926, President Calvin Coolidge delivered the keynote address at the Memorial's dedication. The memorial and surrounding grounds were completed in 1938. The 108<sup>th</sup> Congress designated the museum at the base of the Liberty Memorial as the "National World War I Museum of the United States."

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony. I would be glad to answer any questions that you or other members of the subcommittee may have.

**STATEMENT OF PETER MAY, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR,  
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT  
OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS,  
FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES CONCERNING H.R. 1278, A BILL TO DIRECT THE  
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO CONDUCT A SPECIAL RESOURCE  
STUDY REGARDING THE SUITABILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF  
DESIGNATING THE JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN RECONCILIATION PARK AND  
OTHER SITES IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA, RELATING TO THE 1921 RACE  
RIOT AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES.**

**JANUARY 24, 2012**

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 1278, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study regarding the suitability and feasibility of designating the John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park and other sites in Tulsa, Oklahoma, relating to the 1921 Tulsa race riot as a unit of the National Park System and, for other purposes.

The Department supports enactment of this legislation. However, we feel that priority should be given to the 37 previously authorized studies for potential units of the National Park System, potential new National Heritage Areas, and potential additions to the National Trails System and National Wild and Scenic Rivers System that have not yet been transmitted to Congress.

The Greenwood neighborhood of Tulsa witnessed one of the most violent episodes of racial conflict in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. On May 31, 1921, a white mob entered the city's segregated African-American community and burned more than 35 city blocks of residences and businesses. Rioters destroyed approximately 70% of Greenwood's residential area and virtually the entire business district. An unknown number of people, somewhere between 36 and 300, lost their lives; more than 700 were injured; and nearly 9,000 African Americans were left homeless.

The riot was sparked by the conflict that occurred after the arrest of an African-American youth, Dick Rowland. He was accused of assaulting a white teenaged girl in a public elevator on May 30. Rowland was arrested the next day, May 31, and was held in custody in the Tulsa County Courthouse. That evening, an angry white mob of more than 2,000 men confronted about 75 armed African-American men outside the downtown courthouse.

When a white man attempted to forcibly disarm an African-American World War I veteran, a struggle ensued and a gun was fired. Almost immediately, members of the white mob opened fire. The African-American men returned the volleys and retreated



from downtown to the Greenwood neighborhood with the armed white men in close pursuit. Within hours, much of Greenwood was in flames.

Order was not restored until the following day when a special train carrying 110 soldiers of the Oklahoma City-based National Guard arrived. By then, most of the damage to property and loss of life had already occurred. The case against Dick Rowland was dismissed in September, 1921.

The National Park Service completed a reconnaissance survey of the 1921 Tulsa race riot in 2005. The report concluded that the riot is nationally significant because of the potential ability to illustrate and interpret a tragic and important chapter in the history of the United States. Despite the substantial loss of historic fabric and setting, key historic resources, including the Greenwood Cultural Center, Mt. Zion Baptist Church (listed on the National Register of Historic Places), Vernon Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Greenwood Avenue, Frisco and Santa Fe Railroad tracks, and the site of the Royal Hotel have survived.

The John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park is an important element in a memorial of the 1921 Tulsa race riot. The reconciliation park, established in 2001, tells the story of African Americans' role in building Oklahoma and contributes to a more full account of Oklahoma's history. It is named for John Hope Franklin, who was born in Oklahoma in 1915 and graduated from the then-segregated Booker T. Washington High School. Franklin went on to graduate from Harvard University and became a noted historian and writer. He died in 2009.

Collectively, these resources warrant further study for ways to memorialize and interpret this tragic chapter in American history.

This concludes my prepared remarks, Mr. Chairman. I will be happy to answer any questions you or other committee members may have regarding this bill.