



## Committee on Natural Resources U.S. House of Representatives

Chairman Doc Hastings

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### **Obama Admin's Sudden Reversal to Possibly Allow States to Provide Funding to Open National Parks Raises More Questions**

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, the Obama Administration announced they are reversing their stance and will consider allowing states to fund the opening of National Parks. Up until now, the Obama Administration has actively denied this request from states.

For example, last week the State of Arizona wrote a [letter](#) to the Obama Administration asking to use state money to keep the Grand Canyon open. This request was rejected, even though Arizona was allowed to pay to keep the Grand Canyon open to visitors during the last government shutdown under the Clinton Administration. Meanwhile, the Obama Administration continues to unnecessarily barricade and block public access to private businesses and open-air parks and monuments.

*"Why now, after more than a week of refusing to allow States to pay to keep National Parks open, is the Obama Administration suddenly reversing course? It appears they are truly just making this up as they go along, as they have put out one inconsistent policy after another. States and communities whose economic livelihoods are tied to these national parks deserve better than this Administration's political games to make this shutdown as painful as possible. And parks are not the only areas where the Administration has gone out of their way to block public access, national wildlife refuges and national forests have also been unnecessary barricaded during this shutdown,"* **said House Natural Resources Chairman Doc Hastings.**

*"While I'm pleased to see the Obama Administration partially cave to public pressure and reverse course, at the end of the day states shouldn't have to pay to keep these parks open. Last week, the House passed legislation that would fund all 401 parks across the United States. The Senate and President Obama should immediately act on this legislation and sign it into law."*

Questions still remain as to how and if this vaguely defined policy change will be implemented or if this is a step by the Administration to appear less strident and lenient in the face of sharp criticism. For example, an Interior Department spokesman says they will

only “consider” agreements of Governors who indicate an interest and ability to “fully fund” the National Park Service personnel. This raises questions about the parameters of the policy, whether agreements will actually be approved and how “full funding” will be determined?

Next Wednesday, the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Oversight and Governmental Affairs Committee will be holding a joint [oversight hearing](#) entitled “*As Difficult As Possible: The National Park Service’s Implementation of the Government Shutdown*”

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