

Chairman McClintock and Ranking Member Hanabusa, Let me begin by thanking you for allowing me to testify in front of your subcommittee. Also thank you to Ranking Member Hanabusa for cosponsoring my legislation. You have an important job of overseeing our federal lands and it is vital that we care for them because they belong to all of us.

Our National Parks have long been thought of as America's "Best Idea." In fact they have other complimentary names such as our "Crown Jewels." But more than anything, they are "Ours." The Parks belong to the American people and we should care for them as our own.

It is long past due that we discuss the backlog maintenance in our national parks. Growing up in Eastern Idaho it was a regular event to pack into the car each weekend to visit Yellowstone. It was easy to spend a day in the park and not have to wait in any lines. However, that was a different time.

Today Yellowstone has nearly 4 million annual visitors and their backlog in maintenance is upwards of \$500 million. As a member of the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, I can tell you that their

annual appropriated budget of \$2.9 billion, for the entire agency, simply won't be able to account for the \$11.6 billion backlog in maintenance.

To start the conversation towards solving this problem I introduced the LAND Act to help pay for both backlog maintenance and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I was careful when writing the bill to not dip into LWCF funds to pay for backlog maintenance. That is an important concept that has guided this effort. I am pleased all of the bills we are considering today honor that promise and I look forward to working with Chairman Bishop and his committee to address LWCF as well.

Moving forward, I began working with Secretary Zinke, Senators Alexander and King, and Congressman Schrader on a proposal that we could all support to fix the parks – the National Park Restoration Act. This legislation uses unobligated revenues from all energy sources – including renewables – to pay for the backlog maintenance in national parks. The bill uses the exact same funding mechanism as popular programs like LWCF and the Historic Preservation Fund, without compromising their revenues. It only draws on revenues that would otherwise be due to the Treasury. The bill is projected to

raise \$6.8 billion over 10 years, which would make a significant dent in the backlog maintenance. I am thankful to Congressman Hurd, Ranking Member Hanabusa, Congressman Garamendi, and Congressman Schrader for supporting this bill in an effort to fix our parks. As a supporter of Bureau of Indian Education schools, I also look forward to addressing that critical need in this process as Secretary Zinke has suggested.

We are also considering The Legacy Act introduced by Congressman Hurd. We all share the common goal of fixing this growing problem and The Legacy Act is another positive addition to the conversation. I do not view these proposals as competing. They are complimentary. They both use the same revenue source to pay for backlog maintenance and both have bipartisan support.

A key element to enacting policy in this environment is advocating for fiscally responsible legislation. The National Park Restoration Act does that by creating a baseline of projected energy revenues that must be exceeded before revenues could accrue into the fund. This mechanism was put in place to control the costs associated with the bill, and is a fundamental component

to winning support from the House, Senate, and Administration - a required step to become a law.

As a supporter of National Parks, LWCF, and other important programs that are critical to taking care of our public lands, I am asking that members of the committee examine the legislation for what it is – an honest effort to fix the parks. I don't want to pit any programs against each other. I simply want to focus our efforts on using the longtime practice of existing energy revenues to fix public lands.

Thank you again Chairman McClintock and Ranking Member Hanabusa and I look forward to working with all advocates for our national parks to fix backlog maintenance.