

Subcommittee on Federal Lands
Tom McClintock, Chairman
Hearing Memorandum

June 21, 2016

To: All Subcommittee on Federal Lands Members

From: Majority Staff – Terry Camp
Subcommittee on Federal Lands, x 6-7736

Hearing: Legislative hearing on H.R. 5114 (Rep. Martha McSally), To establish the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to place youth and veterans in the United States in national service positions to protect, restore, and enhance the great outdoors of the United States, and for other purposes.
June 23, 2016 at 2:00 PM; 1324 Longworth HOB

H.R. 5114 (Rep. Martha McSally), “21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act of 2016”

Bill Summary

H.R. 5114, introduced by Representative Martha McSally (R-AZ), codifies and expands the Administration’s 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) program. The 21CSC Act increases the number of federal agencies that can work with 21CSC organizations. Additionally, the bill establishes standards for data collection and measuring the effectiveness of 21CSC programs and provides two years of non-competitive hiring eligibility with federal agencies for young people and veterans who participate in 21CSC programs.

Cosponsors:

Rep. Christopher Gibson [R-NY-19], Rep. Jared Huffman [D-CA-2], Rep. Doris Matsui, [D-CA-6], Rep. Seth Moulton [D-MA-6], Rep. Dan Newhouse [R-WA-4], Rep. Jared Polis, [D-CO-2], Rep. Ryan Zinke [R-MT].

Invited Witnesses

PANEL I

The Honorable Martha McSally (R-AZ-02)
Member of Congress

The Honorable Seth Moulton (D-MA-06)
Member of Congress

PANEL II

Mr. Michael Reynolds

Associate Director, Workforce and Inclusion
National Park Service
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Kevin Heiner

Regional Director
Southwest Conservation Corps
Durango, Colorado

Ms. Mary Ellen Sprenkel

President and CEO
The Corps Network
Washington, D.C.

Background

In 2010, President Obama created the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to encourage Americans, particularly young people, to enjoy our country's rivers and waterways, farms and forests, and local and national parks.¹ As part of this initiative, the President called for the creation of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC) to establish quality jobs, career pathways and service opportunities for youth and veterans.

In response to the President's initiative, the Department of the Interior and its land management bureaus, along with the U.S. Forest Service, established public-private partnership programs identified as 21CSC partnerships. The Public Lands Corps Act (P.L. 103-82) authorizes the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service to carry out these activities. The Administration's 21CSC builds on existing partnerships with youth conservation corps across the country, placing young people and veterans in the United States, in national service positions to work on conservation and restoration projects on America's public lands, waterways and cultural heritage sites.

H.R. 5114, "*The 21st Century Conservation Service Corps Act*," or "21CSC Act," codifies the Administration's 21CSC program and increases the number of federal departments and agencies authorized to partner with 21CSC organizations and participants to support and carry out 21CSC projects. These entities include the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Transportation, Labor, Energy, Defense, Veterans Affairs and Commerce, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Council on Environmental Quality, the Corporation for National and Community Service, Army Corps of Engineers and any other agencies as designated by the President.

¹ The White House. "*America's Great Outdoors: A Promise to Future Generations*." February 2011. https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ceq/ago_report_-_report_only_2-7-11.pdf

The bill requires coordination among federal agencies to ensure project efficiencies and facilitates approval of corps organizations to participate in the 21CSC. The bill also requires participating agencies to report to Congress to ensure cost-effective and efficient implementation of 21CSC activities.

In addition, H.R. 5114 authorizes participating agencies to provide non-competitive hiring status for participants for two years after completing service if certain terms are met. The bill also provides a 10 percent cost-share requirement for 21CSC organizations. Under the Public Lands Corps Act, this required cost-share is 25 percent.

A Senate companion has been introduced in the 114th Congress by Senator John McCain as S. 1993.

Administration Position

The Administration position on H.R. 5114 is unknown at this time; however, the National Park Service offered testimony in support of the Senate companion bill, S. 1993 at a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing on March 17, 2016.²

Cost

A Congressional Budget Office cost estimate has not yet been completed for this bill.

² O'Dell, Peggy. Statement before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on National Parks. March 17, 2016. http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=F99F18C2-FB2A-44E4-B841-3F70A9079692