

Committee on Natural Resources

Rob Bishop, Chairman
Mark-Up Memorandum

June 20, 2017

To: All Subcommittee on Federal Lands Members

From: Majority Committee Staff – Terry Camp
Subcommittee on Federal Lands (x 6-7736)

Mark-Up: **H.R. 1927 (Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay)**, To amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the African American Civil Rights Network, and for other purposes.
June 22 & 27, 2017; 1324 Longworth HOB

H.R. 1927 (Rep. Wm. Lacy Clay), “*African American Civil Rights Network Act of 2017*”

Bill Summary

H.R. 1927, introduced by Congressman William Lacy Clay Jr. (D-MO-1), directs the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to establish an African American Civil Rights Network that encompasses: 1) all National Park Service (NPS) units and programs that relate to the African American Civil Rights Movement during the period from 1939 through 1968; 2) other federal, state, local, and privately owned properties that relate to the African American Civil Rights Movement and that are included in, or eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places; and 3) other governmental and nongovernmental facilities and programs of an educational, research, or interpretive nature that are directly related to the African American Civil Rights Movement. The bill also requires the Secretary to produce and distribute educational materials, create and adopt an official symbol for the African American Civil Rights Network (Network), establish regulations for participation, and provide technical assistance to other entities interested in joining.

Cosponsors

[71](#)

Background

In 1999, Congress passed the “National Park Service Studies Act of 1999.”¹ This Act required NPS to conduct special resource studies of various sites and areas. Among the areas to be studied were “Civil Rights Sites” on a “multi-State” level. To determine the best way to proceed, NPS partnered with the Organization of American Historians to develop an overview of

¹ Pub. L. 106-113 (54 USC 100507). <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-106publ113/html/PLAW-106publ113.htm>

civil rights history entitled, “Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites (2002, rev. 2008).”²

The framework found that while many civil rights sites had been designated as National Historic Landmarks, other sites still needed to be identified and evaluated. Therefore, the framework recommended that four National Historic Landmarks theme studies be prepared to identify sites that may be nationally significant, and that the study be based on provisions of the 1960s civil rights acts. Through completion of these theme studies, NPS found that a number of sites related to the African American Civil Rights Movement had not been recognized and many were in immediate danger of being lost or destroyed.

With these NPS studies in mind, Congressman William Lacy Clay has introduced several bills over the past five Congresses intended to better recognize and preserve sites related to the African American Civil Rights movement. H.R. 1927, introduced this Congress, requires the Secretary to establish, within the NPS, a Network, the purpose of which is to coordinate federal and nonfederal activities to commemorate, honor, and interpret the history of the African American Civil Rights Movement during the period from 1939 through 1968.

The Network will be comprised of existing units and programs of the NPS related to that historical period as well as the properties and programs of other federal, state, local, and private entities that join the network. Additionally, the NPS will be required to produce and distribute educational materials, create and adopt an official symbol for the network, establish regulations for participation, and provide technical assistance to other entities interested in joining. The Network established by this bill is similar to “The National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom,” authorized in 2008 by Public Law 105-203.³

In the 114th Congress, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing on nearly identical legislation introduced as H.R. 3683.⁴ Additionally, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee favorably reported a nearly identical bill introduced as S. 2309.⁵ This Congress, a nearly identical Senate companion bill has been introduced as S. 857 by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH).

Major Provisions

- Directs the Secretary of the Interior to establish, within the NPS, an African American Civil Rights Network, which will consist of: 1) existing units and programs of the NPS; 2) federal, state, local, and privately owned property that are directly related to the African American civil rights movement and that are listed in, or determined by the

² National Park Service. *Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites*. 2002, Revised 2008. Accessed June 19, 2017. https://www.nps.gov/nhl/learn/themes/CivilRights_Framework.pdf

³ Pub. L. 105-203. July 21, 1998. (54 USC 3083). <https://www.congress.gov/105/plaws/publ203/PLAW-105publ203.pdf>

⁴ Subcommittee on Federal Lands Legislative Hearing on H.R. 5129, H.R. 799 and H.R. 3683. November 30, 2016. <https://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=401379>

⁵ Senate Report 114-348. <https://www.congress.gov/114/crpt/srpt348/CRPT-114srpt348.pdf>

Secretary to be eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places; 3) other governmental and non-governmental facilities and programs of an educational, research, or interpretive nature that are directly related to the African American civil rights movement.

- Requires the Secretary to review civil rights studies and reports that may already be underway or complete to complement, not duplicate, aspects of the African American civil rights movement; produce and disseminate educational materials such as handbooks, maps, interpretive guides, or electronic information; and adopt an official, uniform symbol or device for the Network and issue regulations for the symbol's use.
- Authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to enter into cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding and provide technical assistance with federal and non-federal elements of the Network.

Administration Position

The Administration position on H.R. 1927 is unknown at this time. However, in the 114th Congress, the NPS offered testimony in support of a nearly identical bill, H.R. 3683.⁶

Cost

A Congressional Budget Office cost estimate has not yet been completed for this bill. However, a CBO cost estimate provided in the 114 Congress for S. 2309, a nearly identical bill, estimated the cost to be about \$5.5 million over the 2017-2021 period and an additional \$1.5 million annually thereafter.⁷

Effect on Current Law (Ramseyer):

⁶ Testimony of Dr. Stephanie Toothman, Associate Director for Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science, National Park Service before the House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Federal Lands. November 30, 2016. Accessed June 19, 2017. <https://www.doi.gov/ocl/hr-3683>

⁷ [CBO Cost Estimate, S. 2309, African American Civil Rights Network Act of 2016](#), September 2, 2016.