

**STATEMENT OF DR. STEPHANIE TOOTHMAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,  
CULTURAL RESOURCES, PARTNERSHIPS, AND SCIENCE, NATIONAL PARK  
SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION OF THE HOUSE  
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 4119, TO STUDY  
THE SUITABILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING THE WEST HUNTER  
STREET BAPTIST CHURCH IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA, AS A UNIT OF THE  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.**

**July 29, 2014**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 4119, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the West Hunter Street Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, and for other purposes.

The Department supports enactment of H.R. 4119 with amendments. However, we believe that priority should be given to the 24 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.

H.R. 4119 authorizes a special resource study of the original location of the West Hunter Street Baptist Church, located at 775 Martin Luther King Junior Drive SW, Atlanta, Georgia. This study would evaluate the West Hunter Street Baptist Church and the surrounding area to determine whether they meet the National Park Service's criteria for inclusion in the National Park System of national significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for National Park Service management. The study would also consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the resources. We estimate the cost of the study to range from \$100,000 to \$200,000, based on similar studies conducted in recent years.

Founded as the Friendship Baptist Church in 1881, the congregation moved in 1906 to a stone building on West Hunter Street, which was later renamed Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. During the Civil Rights Movement, the West Hunter Street Baptist Church served as a headquarters for many civil rights workers and organizers, was the site of important leadership meetings, and doubled as a school for nonviolent protest during initiatives such as the Voter Education Project and the Freedom Summer of 1964. It was also a spiritual refuge for the men and women who devoted their lives to the cause. In 1973, the congregation moved to a new location on what was then called Gordon Street. Ralph David Abernathy, Sr., a leader of the Civil Rights Movement and an associate of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., served as pastor of the church from 1962 until his death in 1990. Subsequent to his death, the street in front of the church was renamed Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard in his honor.

We recommend amending the bill and the long title to clearly define that the area to be studied will include the city block where the West Hunter Street Baptist Church is located. We will be happy to provide an amendment for this purpose.

We also recommend a technical amendment to section 2(c) to reflect that the name of the National Park System General Authorities Act has been enacted into law. The amendment is as follows:

On page 2, strike lines 21-24 and insert the following:

“subsection (a) shall be conducted in accordance with the National Park System General Authorities Act (16 U.S.C. 1a-5(c)).”.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement and I will be happy to answer any questions that members of the committee may have.

**STATEMENT OF DR. STEPHANIE TOOTHMAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,  
CULTURAL RESOURCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SCIENCE, NATIONAL PARK  
SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
NATIONAL PARKS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES ON  
S. 311, TO DIRECT THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO STUDY THE  
SUITABILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING SITES IN THE LOWER  
MISSISSIPPI RIVER AREA IN THE STATE OF LOUISIANA AS A UNIT OF THE  
NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**July 29, 2014**

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 311, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating sites in the Lower Mississippi River Area in the State of Louisiana as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes. The Senate passed this bill on July 9, 2014.

The Department supports this legislation with an amendment described later in this statement. However, we feel that priority should be given to the 24 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.

S. 311 would authorize a study of natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources in Plaquemines Parish, located south of the City of New Orleans, for potential designation as a unit of the National Park System. The study area would include Fort St. Philip and Fort Jackson, located on opposite sides of a bend in the Mississippi River about eight miles upstream from the town of Venice, Louisiana, and approximately 73 river miles downstream from New Orleans at an ancient "Head of Passes" site. The term "Head of Passes" refers to the site where the main stem of the Mississippi River branches off to the east, the south, and the southwest at its mouth in the Gulf of Mexico. The present day Head of Passes is just south of the town of Venice. The study is estimated to cost between \$200,000 and \$400,000 based on similar studies.

As passed by the Senate, S. 311 requires that the study either be conducted and be paid for from non-federal sources, or that non-federal funds be donated to the National Park Service to pay for the study. We believe that this funding requirement should not set a precedent for other study bills. There are many valuable natural, cultural, and historic resources in our country that may be good candidates for a National Park Service special resource study. We would not like to see a trend develop where those resources are not studied for their potential as national park units because of a lack of community or interest-group funding available to pay for a study. Further, if the study authorized by this bill is conducted by a non-federal entity, the National Park Service still would be required to expend a modest amount of federal funds to review the study to ensure that it complies with the requirements of section 3 of S. 311. We recommend an amendment to fund this study consistent with other studies.

Fort St. Philip was originally built in 1749, and the construction of Fort Jackson, named for Andrew Jackson, the hero of the Battle of New Orleans in 1815, began in 1822. Fort St. Philip played an important defensive role in the Battle of New Orleans and both forts were employed unsuccessfully to defend New Orleans and the Confederacy from Admiral Farragut's union fleet during the Civil War. Both Fort St. Philip and Fort Jackson have been designated as National Historic Landmarks, which attests to their national significance. Fort St. Philip, privately owned at the present time, is in ruins and overgrown with vegetation. Fort Jackson was operated by Plaquemines Parish as a historical museum until Hurricane Katrina caused extensive damage, and it has been closed to the public ever since.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

**STATEMENT OF DR. STEPHANIE TOOTHMAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CULTURAL RESOURCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SCIENCE, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION OF THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE, CONCERNING S. 476, A BILL TO AMEND THE CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL DEVELOPMENT ACT TO EXTEND THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK COMMISSION.**

**July 29, 2014**

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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 S. 476, a bill that would amend the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Development Act to extend the authority of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission.

The Department supports S. 476. The establishment of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission (Commission) on January 8, 1971, stemmed in part from the unique nature of the canal. It is unlike most areas administered by the National Park Service as it is a linear park running along a 185-mile stretch of river shoreline and is flanked by the nation's capital, suburban communities, and numerous small towns.

S. 476 would extend the authorization of the Commission for an additional 10 years. The Commission's authority to operate terminated on January 8, 2011. S. 476 would extend the Commission's authority to operate to 10 years after the date of enactment of the Act.

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, begun in 1828 and completed in 1850, runs continuously 185 miles from Georgetown in the District of Columbia to Cumberland, Maryland. Originally planned to link Washington, D.C., and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as part of this nation's canal-building era, the canal was constructed to be a major commercial route. While the canal operated until 1924 when it was abandoned, competition from the newly constructed railroad and the National Road resulted in much less commercial success than its builders had hoped. In 1938, the United States purchased the narrow canal right-of-way from Georgetown to Cumberland, Maryland, and partially restored the lower end of the canal.

In 1961, the C & O Canal Monument was created by Presidential Proclamation No. 3391 but no funding was provided to develop the area or acquire adjacent lands. A proposal to construct a highway along the canal's route met considerable public opposition led by U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. His support for preserving the canal ultimately led to the establishment of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park, running the length of the original canal.

When the park was established in 1971, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission was created. The 19-member Commission served to link the various jurisdictions along the length of the park. Under the 1971 legislation, the Secretary of the Interior or her

designee was directed to meet and consult with the Commission at least annually on general policies and specific matters related to the administration and development of the park.

The Commission performed a valuable service during its first 40 years in advising and assisting the National Park Service in the administration and development of the park. In the early years, the Commission served as the vehicle for public meetings in the development of the park's general plan and several site-specific development concept plans. In the years since, the Commission has served as the public forum for discussing implementation of plans along the 185 miles of the park.

The Commission represented not only the local park neighbors, but the national constituency as well. Many Commission members had a lifelong interest in the C & O Canal and the National Park Service. The Commission met quarterly and Commission members were only compensated for reimbursement of actual expenses for meetings. Individual members of the Commission served on various volunteer groups and participated in park-sponsored events throughout the year. The commissioners communicated directly with the park superintendent during meetings and individually throughout the year regarding park issues.

The need for the Commission continues because the park is spread across 19 political jurisdictions. The Commission assisted park staff in reaching out to these numerous constituencies and ensuring that all their views were heard. As the work of managing C & O Canal National Historical Park continues, the public connection to park management through the Commission should continue as well. We understand that the appointments for the existing commissioners have expired. If enacted, the Secretary would appoint or reappoint commissioners in accordance with the Act.

This completes my prepared comments concerning S. 476. I will be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the subcommittee may have.

**STATEMENT OF DR. STEPHANIE TOOTHMAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,  
CULTURAL RESOURCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SCIENCE, NATIONAL PARK  
SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION OF THE HOUSE  
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE, CONCERNING H.R. 1785, TO ESTABLISH  
THE MOUNTAINS TO SOUND GREENWAY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA IN THE  
STATE OF WASHINGTON, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**July 29, 2014**

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 1785, a bill to establish the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area in the State of Washington.

The Department supports the objectives of H.R. 1785. The Mountains to Sound Greenway area has been found to meet the National Park Service's interim criteria for designation as a National Heritage Area. However, the Department recommends that Congress pass program legislation that establishes criteria to evaluate potentially qualified National Heritage Areas and a process for the designation, funding, and administration of these areas before designating any additional new National Heritage Areas. The Department also recommends a technical amendment to provide for an official NPS map to accompany the legislation.

There are currently 49 designated national heritage areas, although there is no authority in law that guides their designation and administration as a national system. National Heritage Area Program legislation would provide a much-needed framework for evaluation of proposed national heritage areas, guiding planning and management, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and standardizing timeframes and funding for designated areas.

H.R. 1785 would establish the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area to include lands within the Yakima River basin upstream of Manastash Creek and the cities of Ellensburg, Roslyn, Cle Elum, and South Cle Elum in Kittitas County. It would also include all lands in the Snoqualmie River, Cedar River, and Lake Washington watersheds, the Puget Sound near shore watersheds within and including the cities of Seattle and Shoreline, and 22 additional cities in King County.

The proposed local coordinating entity would be the nonprofit corporation Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust (Trust).

NPS review of the *Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area Feasibility Study* completed by the Trust in March 2012, found that the study did not meet the NPS *Interim National Heritage Area Feasibility Study Guidelines*. The NPS requested the Trust provide a revised statement of national importance; themes and a list of associated resources; a summary of traditions, customs, beliefs and folk life; and a boundary justification. The NPS received the Addendum from the Trust on May 27, 2014, which (1) explained that the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area is nationally important for its association with the expansion of our national transportation system and the creation of our modern timber industry; (2)

identified three themes associated with the region's national importance and their related historic and natural resources; (3) summarized the ongoing traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that interprets and celebrates the region's national importance; and (4) justified the proposed boundary in relation to the strategic assemblage of resources and opportunities for conservation, recreation and education, as well as public interest in this national heritage area designation.

The proposed Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area tells a nationally important story of how the Northern Pacific and Milwaukee railroads, and later the Sunset Highway and Interstate 90, created the final section of an historic transportation corridor that wove the Northwest into the nation's fabric, opened up trade between the United States and Asia, and led to the development of the nation's modern timber industry.

Although the Puget Sound area was part of the United States by 1950, the Cascade Range isolated the region from the rest of the nation, with little access to its abundant natural resources and sheltered deep-water ports. Chartered by President Lincoln in 1864, the Northern Pacific Railroad was constructed along a Native American pathway through the nearly impassible Snoqualmie Pass to reach Seattle 20 years later. The connection of the Eastern seaboard and Great Lakes with the farthest reaches of the continental United States reinforced the newly drawn American-Canadian border. The City of Seattle grew into a booming hub for shipbuilding and the trade of foreign goods and the region's own wealth of natural resources, opening the country's first trade routes on what we now call the Pacific Rim. Rail towns sprung up along the main lines with mill and coal towns on the spurs, while piers stretched into Puget Sound, attracting immigrant workers whose descendants live in the region today.

The Milwaukee Road crossed the Cascades in the early 1900s using pioneering tunneling and electrification techniques. The high speed electric trains of the Milwaukee Road carried Japanese silk to New York, the nation's most precious rail commodity after gold and silver bullion, but the railroad made its money carrying passengers to ski, hike, and climb at Snoqualmie Pass. The conservation ethic that developed in the region from enjoyment of the region's natural beauty is strongly held today.

Washington's modern economy is descended directly from the Northern Pacific Land Grant that was used to build the railroad. In place of public financing, the railroad received the largest federal land grant in American history. The railroad was granted 40 million acres - every other square mile of land in a checkerboard pattern up to forty miles on either side of the right-of-way. This consolidated ownership, as well as steam technology brought by the railroad, created the booming timber industry that helped rebuild San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fueled shipbuilding in World War I. Airplanes being produced for the military on a large scale for the first time were built from the region's prized spruce trees. Demand for this aircraft led William Boeing to found a company in the region in 1916 that supplies the nation's air transportation industry today.

Plantation forestry involving sustained-yield harvest and reforestation was invented in 1937 by William Weyerhaeuser, who had amassed one and a half million acres of Washington timberland. He established the first seedling industry at Snoqualmie Falls and began to manage timber across

multiple harvests, a radical idea at the time. This remains the industry standard across much of the country today.

The cultural heritage of the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area is alive in the ethnic diversity of the region's population, in the traditions, customs and celebrations, and in museums, festivals, historic sites, and interpretive trails that both residents and visitors enjoy today. Following modern-day political and land-management structures, the proposed heritage area boundaries are pragmatic, thus offering the best formula for long-term success as communities seek to manage, enhance, and interpret resources across this landscape.

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

**STATEMENT OF DR. STEPHANIE TOOTHMAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,  
CULTURAL RESOURCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SCIENCE, NATIONAL PARK  
SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION OF THE HOUSE  
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 5086, A BILL TO  
AMEND THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM ACT TO DIRECT THE SECRETARY OF  
THE INTERIOR TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING  
THE CHIEF STANDING BEAR NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL.**

**July 29, 2014**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and present the Department's views on H.R. 5086, a bill to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail, and for other purposes.

The Department supports H.R. 5086 with a technical amendment. However, we feel that priority should be given to the 24 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.

H.R. 5086 would amend Section 5(c) of the National Trails System Act by directing the Secretary to conduct a study of the Chief Standing Bear Trail for consideration for inclusion in the National Trails System. We estimate the cost of this study to be approximately \$500,000 based on costs of similar studies previously conducted by the National Park Service.

The proposed Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail would extend approximately 550 miles from Niobrara, Nebraska, to Ponca City, Oklahoma, following the route taken by Chief Standing Bear and the Ponca people during Federal Indian removal, and their return route from Oklahoma back to Niobrara, Nebraska.

Chief Standing Bear was born around 1829 in the traditional Ponca homeland near the confluence of the Niobrara and Missouri rivers. About thirty years later, the tribe sold its homeland to the United States, retaining a 58,000-acre reservation between Ponca Creek and the Niobrara River.

When the federal government created the Great Sioux Reservation in 1868, the Ponca Reservation was included within its boundaries, depriving them of title to their remaining lands. In 1877, the federal government decided to remove the Poncas to Indian Territory. Standing Bear, a tribal leader, protested his tribe's eviction. Federal troops enforced the removal orders and the Poncas arrived in Indian Territory in the summer of 1878.

After leaving Nebraska, one-third of the tribe had died and nearly all of the survivors were sick or disabled. This included Chief Standing Bear's sixteen-year old son, who died in late

December 1878. Wanting to honor his son's last wish to be buried in the land of his birth, Standing Bear gathered a few members of his tribe and started north for the Ponca homeland in early January 1879, reaching the reservation of their relatives, the Omahas, about two months later. Standing Bear carried his son's bones with him to be buried in the familiar earth along the Niobrara River.

Because Indians were not allowed to leave their reservation without permission, Standing Bear and his followers were labeled a renegade band. The Army, on the order of the Secretary of the Interior, arrested them and took them to Fort Omaha, where they were to be held before being returned to Indian Territory. General George Crook, however, sympathized with Standing Bear and his followers and asked Thomas Henry Tibbles, an Omaha newspaperman, for help. Tibbles took up the cause and secured two prominent Omaha attorneys to represent Standing Bear.

The lawyers filed a federal court application for a writ of habeas corpus to test the legality of the detention, basing their case on the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. The government disputed the right of Standing Bear to obtain a writ of habeas corpus on the grounds that an Indian was not a "person" under the meaning of the law. In a landmark decision, U.S. District Court Judge Elmer S. Dundy ruled in favor of Standing Bear, reasoning that he and his band were indeed "persons" under the law, entitled to sever tribal connections, and were free to enjoy the rights of any other person in the land. The government appealed Dundy's decision, but the Supreme Court of the United States refused to hear the case, leaving Standing Bear and his followers free in the eyes of the law. Standing Bear died in 1908 and was buried alongside his ancestors in the Ponca homeland.

A study produced by the National Park Service would apply the criteria provided in the National Trails Act to determine inclusion in the National Trails System. We envision the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail study to focus on exploring recreational opportunities, defining historical aspects of the trail, and establishing methods for a working relationship with partners in order to identify facilities on adjacent lands that would contribute to the purposes of the trail.

Finally, the Department recommends a technical amendment to reference an official NPS map for the legislation.

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

**STATEMENT OF DR. STEPHANIE TOOTHMAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,  
CULTURAL RESOURCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SCIENCE, NATIONAL PARK  
SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL  
RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
REGULATION, CONCERNING H.R. 445, TO AUTHORIZE A NATIONAL HERITAGE  
AREA PROGRAM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**July 29, 2014**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 445, to authorize a National Heritage Area Program, and for other purposes.

The Department supports H.R. 445 with amendments that are described later in this statement. We have long supported legislation to establish a National Heritage Area program within the National Park Service that standardizes timeframes and funding for designated national heritage areas and formally establishes criteria for establishing new heritage areas. We would like to thank Representatives Dent and Tonko, the principal sponsors of this legislation, for their leadership on this issue.

H.R. 445 would formally establish a system of National Heritage Areas to conserve, enhance, and interpret natural, historic, scenic, and cultural resources that together tell nationally significant stories representing our country's heritage. The bill provides uniform national standards for conducting feasibility studies, designating National Heritage Areas, approving management plans and conducting evaluations; it specifies the authorities and duties of the Secretary of the Interior and of the local coordinating entities in conducting these activities. It also authorizes appropriations for each individual national heritage area of up to \$700,000 annually, along with \$300,000 annually for the Secretary to conduct feasibility studies (with not more than \$100,000 for any individual study) and \$750,000 annually to conduct management plans (with not more than \$250,000 for any individual management plan). Finally, the bill sets a sunset date for the National Heritage Area system that is 25 years after the date of enactment.

National Heritage Areas further the mission of the National Park Service by fostering community stewardship of our nation's heritage, while not creating new national park units. Rather, the National Park Service partners with National Heritage Area local coordinating entities and provides technical assistance and matching federal funds from Congress. The National Park Service does not assume ownership of land inside heritage areas or impose land use controls.

National Heritage Areas expand on traditional approaches to resource stewardship by supporting large-scale, grassroots initiatives that connect local citizens through preservation, conservation, and planning processes. The areas represent a community-driven approach to heritage conservation and economic development. Through public-private partnerships and the facilitation of a local coordinating entity, National Heritage Areas support historic preservation, natural resource conservation, recreation, heritage tourism, and educational projects. Leveraging funds and long-term support for projects, these partnerships foster pride of place and an enduring

stewardship ethic. Because heritage areas are lived-in landscapes, local coordinating entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make their heritage relevant to local interests and needs. Through their resources, National Heritage Areas tell nationally important stories that celebrate our nation's diverse heritage.

The first National Heritage Area, the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, was designated 30 years ago. Since that time, Congress has authorized another 48 National Heritage Areas in 32 states across the country. Numerous bills to designate more National Heritage Areas are pending in Congress. While the earliest National Heritage Area bills had differing management and funding structures, National Heritage Areas created since 1996 have become more standardized in how they are studied, designated, managed, and funded. Regardless of when created, all designated National Heritage Areas strive for long-term sustainability.

The need for and value of National Heritage Area program legislation has been well-considered and is supported in numerous studies. In 2005, the Administration identified the need for program legislation as part of an overall review of the program. In 2006, the National Park System Advisory Board report *Charting a Future for National Heritage Areas* recommended a legislative and policy foundation for the National Heritage Areas program. In 2009, the National Parks 2nd Century Committee reported on the value of National Heritage Areas as a collaborative model, recommending that they be recognized as long-term assets to the National Park System. Passage of legislation to authorize and define a nationwide system of National Heritage Areas was a key recommendation of the Committee's 2009 report *Advancing the National Park Idea*. In 2011, in *America's Great Outdoors: A Promise to Future Generations*, the Department of the Interior included a recommendation to "...establish through legislation clearly defined standards and processes to support a system of regional and community-based national heritage areas that promote locally supported preservation work, promote heritage tourism, and create jobs." In 2012, National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis issued a Policy Memorandum on the National Heritage Areas Program stating that he endorses the recommendations of the National Parks Second Century Commission that "advocate creation of a clearly defined system of National Heritage Areas as well as funding at a level that will allow them to carry out their work." Just recently, the National Park Service's *Cultural Resource Challenge* (2014) expressed support for the passage of National Heritage Area program legislation and continued funding for National Heritage Areas.

While we support enactment of H.R. 445, we recommend amending the bill in several areas:

First, we recommend establishing the National Heritage Areas program as an ongoing responsibility of the National Park Service, reflecting the fact that the National Heritage Areas already designated by Congress do not sunset. As introduced, H.R. 445 provides a sunset of the National Heritage Area System established by the bill 25 years after the date of enactment.

Second, we recommend amending the bill to clarify that the requirement for local coordinating entities to complete a management plan for a National Heritage Area would occur after an area has been designated by Congress, rather than prior to designation. This would be consistent with

the requirements that are standard for the existing National Heritage Areas. The bill should include a process for the approval of management plans by the Secretary of the Interior, which is also a standard requirement for currently designated National Heritage Areas.

Third, we recommend including a requirement for evaluations of designated National Heritage Areas three years before their authorization of appropriations for heritage area program funding expires. These “three-year-out” reports, which have become a standard feature of National Heritage Area designation bills, are essential for helping the Department and Congress determine the future course of these areas.

Fourth, we recommend deleting the authorization of a specified amount of appropriations for conducting management plans. Under current practice, management plans are developed by local coordinating entities. They are reviewed by the National Park Service as part of its routine work in assisting National Heritage Areas. It is infeasible to separate out the cost to the National Park Service of performing this work among the other technical assistance and guidance it provides to the areas.

Fifth, we recommend changes to the authorization levels for individual National Heritage Areas and for studies of potential National Heritage Areas. We support including in the bill a total authorization for each individual heritage area of \$10,000,000, to be made available over a period of 15 years. We also support a higher authorization level for studies than the bill provides: \$750,000 as a total amount of funding, rather than \$300,000; and \$250,000 as a total amount for any single study, as opposed to \$100,000. And, we recommend including an authorization for a modest amount of funding on an ongoing basis to support long-term sustainability for designated National Heritage Areas that have reached the end of their eligibility period for receiving funds under the Heritage Partnership Program.

We would be happy to provide the committee and the bill’s sponsors with recommended language for these amendments, along with some other technical amendments which we believe are needed. We look forward to working with the committee toward enactment of this legislation this year.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement. I would be happy to respond to any questions on this legislation.