

**Statement by Congressman Todd Platts (PA-19)**  
**Before the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands**  
**Legislative Hearing on H.R. 2563, H.R. 1335 and H.R. 854**  
**October 4, 2011**

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support today of H.R. 1335, a bill I introduced to extend the boundaries of the Gettysburg National Military Park.

Gettysburg is a unique and very special place. When I travel around the country, I am always proud to talk to fellow citizens about my district in central Pennsylvania, including Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where the United States Army War College is located, and certainly my hometown of York, where the Continental Congress met for 9 months in 1777, and where the Articles of Confederation were adopted. No town, however, that I mention gets quite the reaction as Gettysburg. Not only did Gettysburg host the battle that marked the turning point of the Civil War in 1863, but it is also where President Lincoln gave one of the most historic addresses in our Nation's history.

H.R. 1335 would expand the boundaries of the Gettysburg National Military Park to include the historic Lincoln Train Station, as well as a 45-acre plot of land at the southern base of Big Round Top, in order to ensure preservation of these properties for generations to come. Both pieces of land are historically significant.

The Lincoln Train Station served as a hospital during the time of the 1863 battle and was the departure point for many wounded and deceased soldiers as they were returned to their home communities. The station is also where President Lincoln arrived when he visited Gettysburg to give his historic Gettysburg Address in November 1863.

The 1858 structure is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is currently owned by the Borough of Gettysburg. The Borough uses the station currently as a visitor's center. However, due to the lack of funding and available volunteers, it is unable to keep the center open on a regularly scheduled basis. The Borough of Gettysburg supports this legislation and wishes for the National Park Service to acquire this historic site so that it can be an added destination point for so many visitors to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

The 45-acre parcel of land at the base of Big Round Top hosted cavalry skirmishes in July 1863 as part of the battle and currently contains critical wetlands and wildlife habitat associated with Plum Run. The Gettysburg Foundation currently owns this piece of land and would like to donate it "fee title interest" to the National Park Service once it is added to the park's boundary.

Like all Federal agencies, the National Park Service works within a constrained budget to allocate resources efficiently and effectively. I am sensitive to the current obligations of the NPS and believe that we should expand these commitments with thoughtfulness and without haste. I strongly believe that these two additions proposed by this legislation are truly historic in nature and would add great value to the park's already impressive resources. With that, thank you for holding today's hearing and for reviewing H.R. 1335 for possible committee action.