

Committee on Resources

resources.committee@mail.house.gov

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Thank you Chairman Radanovich and members of the Committee for allowing me the opportunity to come before you to speak on this very worthwhile project.

For over 20 years, an effort has been underway to preserve Fort Heiman.

Nearly three years ago, a "Save Fort Heiman" Committee was formed which included representation from the KY Department of Local Government, KY Department of Transportation, Kentucky Heritage Council, Sons of the Confederacy, Murray State University, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, West Kentucky Corporation and included Calloway County Judge Executive Larry Elkins, McLean County Judge Executive Larry Whitaker, State Senator Jackson, State Representative Buckingham, Michael Pape with Congressman Whitfield's office, and T.C. Freeman with Congressman Bunning's office as active members. Representatives of Congressman Tanner, the Civil War Trust, and the Tennessee State Civil War group have also been kept abreast of the efforts.

Community Awareness Meetings have been held in both Calloway County, Kentucky and Dover, Tennessee. There are over 300 citizens who have expressed strong support for the initiative in writing and are kept abreast of the happenings through e-mails and website.

Over the past two years, a website has been created, three grants written as well as site visits conducted by numerous agencies and individuals.

- In 2002, a grant of \$600,000 from TEA-21 funds was received for land acquisition. The 20% match came in the form of land donation as well as donated labor for disking and seeding the primary property of 25 acres (with a value of \$25,000); Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife agreed to donate seed to return the area to native grasses and the Calloway County Fiscal Court has promised assistance in removal of scrub trees, undergrowth and road maintenance to the site.

- An additional \$75,000 grant was received from Land and Water Conservation and in 2003, the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board awarded \$105,000 for surveys, appraisals and land acquisition with the understanding that an additional \$250,000 would be available in the future for additional land acquisition.

- West Kentucky Corporation and Murray State University have agreed to provide office space until which time a structure can be built on site.

- On September 23rd, tentatively, a check presentation will be held in Murray for the purchase of the land from Dr. Jackson.

- West Kentucky Cooperation has been and continues to be the synergy behind this initiative to save Ft. Heiman

Mr. Chairman, I have read many of the recent proceedings of the Resource Committee in an attempt to familiarize myself with the spirit and intent of federal policy that the committee has promulgated. The spirit and intent of previous action by this Committee demonstrates your commitment to preserving our nation's historic Civil War battlefields national treasures. With that, I respectfully defer the more pertinent historic information attributed to HR 646 to the National Park Service and Congressman Whitfield remarks. Rather, my testimony and appearance this afternoon is directed toward the example of cooperation that can exist between government, all levels of government, and our respective constituency. The opportunity to build upon that cooperative spirit is present at this very moment with the passage of HR 646.

We ask that the federal government, through its representation on The Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Land to partner with entities of local, regional, and state government; thereby furthering the interests of the general public through the long-term preservation and interpretation of Ft. Heiman.

Passage of HR 646 conveys the federal government's approval of local governments cooperating, regionally, without regard to geo-political or socioeconomic differences and the responsibility we both must acknowledge when such an initiative arises from the a local initiative that has garner overwhelming public support.

The boundary expansion of Ft. Donelson so stated in H.R. 646 to include Ft. Heiman will expand the classroom at this site for future generations and our national history (to paraphrase Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo, Chairman comments upon the passage of H.R. 5125 (Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002). the committee's response to a local initiative, which they have already garner overwhelming public support. Please give HB 646 your greatest consideration.

The Following Resolution, which has been adopted by local governmental entities, is further testimony of the importance of my appearance here today:

RESOLUTION

HB 646 – Expanding the boundaries of Fort Donelson National Battlefield to include Fort Heiman

Whereas:

Fort Heiman has great historical significance in the Civil War effort and the trilogy of Forts Heiman, Henry, and Donelson served as a one of the more significant strategic engagements early in the War Between the Sates.

Whereas:

Fort Heiman has been purchased by a development group and divided into lots and is at risk of becoming a subdivision.

Whereas:

The developer and many individual property owners have expressed an interest in selling their properties for the purpose turning the area into a National Historic Site.

Whereas:

The community through grants and other sources to purchase the land to be held in trust by Calloway County Kentucky with the hope to give the property to the National Park has raised over \$1 million dollars.

Whereas:

The National Park Service has determined this site to be culturally, historically and environmentally significant.

Therefore:

We, the citizens interested in the preservation of Fort Heiman, respectively request the Committee's passing of HB 646 and the expansion of the boundaries of Fort Donelson National Battlefield to include the land area of Fort Heiman and provide the necessary funding to interpret the site.