

**DESIGNATION/REAUTHORIZATION OF NATIONAL  
HERITAGE AREAS**

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**HEARING**  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

**S. 574**                      **S. 2037**  
**S. 1387**                    **S. 2645**  
**S. 1721**

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JUNE 22, 2006



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## DESIGNATION/REAUTHORIZATION OF NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS

THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2006

U.S. SENATE,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS,  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES,  
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:33 p.m., in room SD-366, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Craig Thomas presiding.

### OPENING STATEMENT BY HON. CRAIG THOMAS, U.S. SENATOR FROM WYOMING

Senator THOMAS. I call the committee to order.

Thank you very much. We're going to vote in about an hour. So we can just begin as soon as we possibly can.

Good afternoon, I want to welcome Deputy Director Don Murphy from the National Park Service and our other witnesses to today's subcommittee hearing.

Our purpose for this hearing is to receive testimony on five Senate bills.

S. 574, a bill to amend the Quinebaug [kwen-uh-bog] and Shetucket [shuh-tuck-it] Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor Act of 1994 to increase the authorization of appropriations and modify the date on which the authority of the Secretary of the Interior terminates under the Act.

S. 1387, a bill to provide for an update of the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, to extend the authority of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission, to authorize the undertaking of a special resource study of sites and landscape features within the Corridor, and to authorize additional appropriations for the Corridor.

S. 1721, a bill to amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 to extend the authorization for certain national heritage areas, and for other purposes.

S. 2037, a bill to establish the Sangre [San-gray] de [Day] Cristo [Chris-tow] National Heritage Area in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes.

And S. 2645, a bill to establish the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, and for other purposes.

All of these bills concern the designation of new national heritage areas or the reauthorization of existing heritage areas. I think national heritage area designation has accomplished many good

things, but with 27 in existence and over 20 more proposed for designation, the program needs definition and criteria to remain viable. Heritage areas are not units of the National Park System yet they expect annual funding through the national park budget. They are created with a limited funding authorization of \$10 million for a limited time of 15 years yet they return for an extension of both money and time. They seem to be looking more and more like park units from a fiscal perspective, and that was never the intent. I want to encourage the House to pass my bill, S. 243, to give better definition to national heritage areas.

I understand that our witness for S. 574 is prepared to testify that her heritage area has found a way to be self sufficient by the year 2015 and that the bill should be amended to reflect that. I would like to thank Ms. Cutler for developing such a strategy and I challenge every other heritage area to improve on that approach by becoming self sufficient within the initial authorization period of 15 years.

I thank the witnesses for being here and look forward to receiving their testimony.

Senator Allen, if you'd like to go right ahead, sir.

[The prepared statements of Senators Dodd, Kennedy, Lieberman, and Voinovich follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, U.S. SENATOR  
FROM CONNECTICUT

Chairman Thomas, Vice Chairman Alexander, Senator Akaka, and members of the Subcommittee, I thank you for holding this hearing today. I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the Quinebaug-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor (Corridor) reauthorization.

The Corridor is one of the last unspoiled river valleys along the coastal, eastern United States and is often referred to as the *Last Green Valley*. Established twelve years ago, and expanded to include a few more towns in 1999, the region is known for its scenery, vibrant wildlife, recreational opportunities, and more than 100 historic and architecturally significant mills. The Corridor is highly regarded as an advocate for resource protection and is looked to by its 35 small communities and residents as the glue that holds together the regional success stories. Hundreds of volunteers and thousands of hours of service have contributed to the projects and programs of the Corridor each year.

The excellence of their work has been recognized by state and national awards including the 2005 Public Education Award from the American Planning Association of the Green Valley Institute.

What I find very impressive is their record of leveraging non-federal matches to the federal investment. In fact, the cumulative ratio is \$19 non-federal dollars to each federal dollar. In a time of scarce federal resources, I think it is clear that the Corridor is a great federal investment.

Since Senator Lieberman, Senator Kennedy and Senator Kerry joined with me last year in introducing S. 574, a bill to extend the authorization of the Corridor, the Corridor itself completed an innovative Sustainability Plan, The Trail to 2015, and intends to be self-sufficient of federal funding by 2015. They are the first heritage corridor to embark on such a plan.

However in the intervening years, it is imperative that the Corridor continue to receive federal appropriations to support critical programs while it is developing an alternative resource base.

Therefore, I respectfully request that we amend our bill to extend the Quinebaug-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor Authorization Act of 1994 to extend the period of authorization beyond 2009 to 2015, and to extend the appropriation to reflect an additional \$6 million to coincide with the six-year extension. This would reflect the Corridor's timetable to be self-sustaining by 2015.

I would be remiss if I didn't recognize and thank Charlene Cutler for the wonderful job she is doing. She is the Executive Director and CEO of Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc., the grassroots nonprofit designated as the management en-

tity for the Corridor and she will offer testimony at this hearing in support of this proposal.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD M. KENNEDY, U.S. SENATOR  
FROM MASSACHUSETTS

I commend Chairman Thomas and Senator Akaka for holding this hearing. Earlier this year, Senators Voinovich, Chafee, Byrd, Grassley, Specter, Kerry, Graham, DeWine, Reed, Schumer, Clinton, Rockefeller and I requested the Committee to consider S. 1721, and I appreciate the opportunity to offer my strong support for that bill, as well as two others on which the Committee will receive testimony today.

Senate bills 1721, 1387, and 574 would reauthorize Heritage Areas covering thousands of square miles across 12 states. Among them are the Essex National Heritage Area, the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, and the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, which span 56 cities and towns in the northeast and south-central regions of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. They include some of the nation's most historic, scenic and culturally significant sites, and it's vital that they be preserved.

Essex County is uniquely historic. It includes Salem, where the Heritage Area Commission is based, which was among the nation's first colonial settlements dating back to the early 17th century. It was home to the great American author Nathaniel Hawthorne, and was also the site of the infamous Salem witch trials of 1692.

The city of Lawrence gave us the 1912 "Bread & Roses Strike," which was an early battlefield in the effort to protect the rights of the nation's factory workers.

In Amesbury, the Merrimack River powered some of the nation's earliest textile mills, and John Greenleaf Whittier, the poet and abolitionist, did most of his writing here.

Gloucester is one of the nation's oldest and greatest fishing ports.

Essex County has all of this history and much more. Congress recognized its significance when it established the Essex National Heritage Area 10 years ago as part of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Act of 1996.

Earlier this month, the Heritage Area celebrated its tenth anniversary, and the event was called "10 years and 100 Milestones." I ask the Committee to include a copy of my remarks on that occasion, and I urge the Committee to act on S. 1721, so that these unique treasures may be preserved and protected for future generations.

Both S. 1721 and Sen. Chafee's bill, S. 1387, would reauthorize the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, which includes 24 cities and towns in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The Blackstone Corridor is a window into the nation's early industrial period. It was here that the nation's first factory—the Slater Mill—was built in 1790. It was a cotton-spinning mill powered by the Blackstone River in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Its success inspired other water-powered mills and led to America's Industrial Revolution, in which raw materials from the south were shipped to New England to be woven into textiles. The process greatly strengthened the nation's commercial power and reduced its dependence on imported goods.

Today, there are few remnants of our early Industrial period. Many of the old mill buildings have been demolished and replaced with modern structures, or put to entirely different uses. That's why the Blackstone Corridor, which preserves and promotes understanding about mill community-living, is so precious. It offers a glimpse at America as a young nation on the way to becoming a world power, and it honors the ingenuity and hard work that led us forward.

In fact, Blackstone was the nation's second nationally-designated Heritage Area—established in 1986, two years after the Illinois & Michigan National Heritage Corridor, and it's been a remarkable success. Last year, the Corridor Commission's Sustainability Study reported that "the Commission has directly sponsored or participated in more than 400 projects within the Corridor." The Study also found that, "A conservative estimate of [National Park Service] funds indicates a 22-to-1 match—a public-private investment in excess of \$500 million."

The reauthorization legislation needs to be enacted before November when the Blackstone Corridor Commission expires.

I also urge the Committee's support for Senator Dodd's bill, S. 574, to reauthorize the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, which includes 35 communities in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

This Corridor, commonly known as "The Last Green Valley," is among the few remaining areas in the Northeast with thousands of contiguous acres of open space, and much of it looks just as it did when the nation was founded. At night, its 1,000

square-mile area of darkness can be seen from the sky or in satellite photos of the northeast, surrounded by lights from the metropolitan areas of New York City, Worcester, and Boston.

The Last Green Valley has had remarkable success in moving toward self-sufficiency. The Corridor Commission has leveraged \$4.8 million from the Heritage Area program into more than \$89 million from other sources—nearly 19 times the Park Service investment. Indeed, I understand that the Commission wishes to amend S. 574 to reduce this authorization from 2027 to 2015, and I support such a change. Again, though, I ask the Committee to do all it can to expedite the enactment of the bill.

I know that some Senators have reservations about the Heritage Areas program and the need for reauthorization. I understand those concerns, particularly at a time of large annual budget deficits and too few resources for Park Service programs. But these are important investments that shouldn't be cut off.

The nation's Heritage Areas promote and preserve national treasures. States and localities shouldn't have to bear the full burden. The Heritage Areas are effective in using Park Service funds to leverage private, state and local aid, and the program is fundamentally sound. Congress should continue to support them rather than allow them to expire prematurely.

I urge the Committee to approve Senate Bills 1721, 1387, and 574 soon, so that these Heritage Areas won't lose their leveraging power, and can continue to strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones to care for these important parts of the nation's history.

I thank the Committee for scheduling this hearing and for the opportunity to testify in support of these bills, and I look forward to working with the Committee to enact these important bills.

[Attachment.]

#### TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF ESSEX NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

JUNE 1, 2006

Ten years ago we began a new experiment to see if the federal government could partner with local organizations to bring a broad range of communities together—34 in all—from Lawrence to Peabody and from Saugus to Salisbury—to plan a stronger future by promoting our common heritage, preserving our history, and investing in education and cultural awareness. We set out to create new economic opportunities by promoting cultural tourism, which is now one of the principal economic engines of our state.

It was a novel and relatively untried approach, and many felt it would be difficult to bring so many interests together. But its been a remarkable success here in Essex County, and you've become a model for other communities across the country.

Few things are more challenging than creating a broad consensus, but the rewards are impressive when all that hard work pays off. And it's easy to see it's paying off for the North Shore.

The "10 years and 100 milestones" presentation you've made tonight just begins to tell this story. From the transformation of the United Shoe Machinery site into the Cummings Center in Beverly to the lighthouse restoration work of the Thatcher Island Association, these milestones demonstrate an enduring commitment on the part of so many.

Essex County has been blessed with a remarkable and proud legacy. Its history dates from the years of Nathaniel Hawthorne and the earliest days of our democracy, and its beautiful landscape and seascapes rival any in the world.

For nearly 400 years, the story of Essex County has been the story of America—from the first European settlement—to the rise of the sea trade—to the industrial revolution—and now to the dawning of this new age of global communication.

The heritage of the area is preserved in its many outstanding cultural and historic organizations that work in partnership with the Heritage Commission. I think of the Trustees of Reservations, who've protected some of the most historic properties in our state for future generations, such as Appleton Farms in Ipswich, which was established in 1638 and remains one of the oldest continually operating farms in the United States.

I think of the Peabody-Essex Museum, which has just undergone a brilliant renovation that will help us tell the story of the China trade and the region's early economic vitality.

In Gloucester, there's the Maritime Heritage Center, the Fishermen's Wives Memorial, and the historic Schooner Adventure, which has been restored to its early glory. Each of them help us understand the magnitude of the past challenges con-

fronting our fishing families, and the extraordinary courage it took to master the sea.

In Amesbury, the restored historic Lowell Boat Shop, the oldest continuously operating such shop in the nation, is a wonderful place to learn more about the skills and artistry of boat craft.

The Saugus Ironworks National Historic Site offers visitors an opportunity to learn about the nation's first integrated ironworks, and provides fascinating information on all of the Heritage Area's programs.

One of the most impressive community efforts has been the construction of the Friendship. I was privileged to join you all five years ago in Gloucester and in Salem for her commissioning ceremony. Building the Friendship was truly a labor of love, citizens young and old, business leaders and community leaders—each of whom understood what the Friendship would mean to the area.

It was not a single voice but a strong chorus that came to Congress for federal support, and we were happy to help. I still remember showing Senator Bob Byrd the postcards that school children sent in and the beautiful painting they presented us. In the end, it was the heartfelt sincerity of the children that helped carry the day in Congress, and today the Friendship moored in the picturesque harbor near here is a noble flagship that all visitors to Essex County salute.

I was proud to be a part of that effort, and proud to support the continuing work of the Essex National Heritage Area.

The federal government has provided essential seed money. But it's the communities and towns across the county who made it happen, leveraging the federal aid with at least two or three and sometimes five dollars of private sector investment for each dollar of federal funds.

Our challenge now is to take this public private partnership approach into the next ten years with the same sense of purpose, high expectations, and determination.

The new Leonard Partnership Grants will encourage that kind of leadership, and I commend this year's winners—the Ford School and the Salem Boys and Girls Club—for their outreach programs that serve young people and sustain community awareness and involvement so well.

Together, we can achieve even more in the next decade, so that a new generation of our citizens from Newburyport to Lynn and Haverhill to Salem will understand their precious heritage as residents of one of the nation's founding colonies and know about the successive generations—the ironworkers, the fishermen, the writers, authors, the businessmen and public officials, who've worked to leave the region better off than the way they've found it.

I congratulate you on all you've accomplished—and I pledge my full support as you meet the new challenges of the coming decade.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN, U.S. SENATOR  
FROM CONNECTICUT

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley in north-eastern Connecticut and south-central Massachusetts is "The Last Green Valley" in the midst of the urban sprawl that covers much of the Boston-to-Washington corridor. This National Heritage Area is half the size of Grand Canyon National Park and more than ten times the size of Acadia National Park, the largest national park in the northeast. This regionally and nationally important landscape provides wild-life habitat, recreation opportunities, and important ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration, erosion control, and clean water.

I have supported the efforts of my esteemed colleague from Connecticut, Senator Dodd, who has worked tirelessly to ensure funding for this important National Heritage Area, as have my friends from Massachusetts, Senators Kennedy and Kerry.

Thanks to the excellent management of the nationally-recognized grassroots non-profit organization, Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor (QSHC), Inc., federal appropriations have been leveraged and matched by funds from state, local, and private sources with a cumulative ratio of nineteen dollars to each federal dollar. QSHC Inc. has developed "The Trail to 2015, a Sustainability Plan," which puts The Last Green Valley on track to being self sufficient and sustainably managed by 2015.

Today I testify in support of amending the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor Reauthorization Act of 1994 to extend the period of authorization through 2015—six years beyond the 2009 current level—and to maintain the level of authorized funding at one million dollars per year throughout that period. That would represent a total authorization increase of six million dollars.

This amendment comports with QSHC Inc.'s management plan and reflects the fact that QSHC will not need federal money after 2015.

With this amendment, we can ensure that The Last Green Valley remains green and protected for future generations and for America's wildlife. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE V. VOINOVICH, U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today to discuss legislation designating and reauthorizing National Heritage Areas. As you know, I introduced S. 1721, the National Heritage Area Extension Act, on September 19, 2005. I believe this bill is vital to the ongoing protection and promotion of the nation's cultural, historic and environmental resources. Therefore, I urge the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to consider and pass this important legislation.

Heritage areas preserve thousands of unique national resources without restricting land uses or interfering with private property rights. They do so by using federal investments to leverage local public and private capital. Last year, more than \$100 million was leveraged in community investments, with nearly half coming from private funding, and the funds were used to improve recreational trails, provide educational programs, and award local heritage project grants.

S. 1721 would enable this worthwhile federal support for our national treasures to continue. The bill authorizes \$10 million per year through fiscal year 2027 for the National Coal Heritage Area, the Tennessee Civil War Heritage Area, the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area, the Steel Industry American Heritage Area, the Essex National Heritage Area, the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor, America's Agricultural Partnership, the Ohio & Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor, and the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. These nine Heritage Areas were originally authorized in the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Act of 1996, but they are now near their spending caps and will be unable to continue leveraging federal funding without a new authorization.

In addition, the bill authorizes \$10 million through fiscal year 2016 for the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, which was established in 1986, expands the Corridor Commission's membership, and orders a new Corridor Plan. The New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route, which was established in 1988, would be ordered to prepare a new strategic plan focused on improving local public and private participation. The Mississippi River National Heritage Area would be established, including counties bordering the river, and \$20 million would be authorized to implement its management plan of inventorying, improving, and promoting the region's resources.

Heritage Areas are proven methods of community preservation and revitalization. Their success results from their public-private partnerships, which have evolved in two decades of working well with local businesses, community activists, regional officials, county-wide organizations, and state and federal agencies.

Again, thank you for holding this hearing. It is my hope that we can act on this important legislation in the near future.

**STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE ALLEN, U.S. SENATOR  
FROM VIRGINIA**

Senator ALLEN. Sure, thank you, Chairman Thomas, and I'm pleased to have the opportunity here and I know our committee is to hear this subject and this topic at this hearing that is very close to my heart. As a history buff, and in fact, as a student in history, I feel very, very strongly that it is important to preserve and celebrate and learn from the rich history of our country; many great things in our past, some things that aren't so great. And regardless, people can learn from them. In our Commonwealth of Virginia, we're particularly proud of the many historical events and people who are essential for the foundation and shaping of our country, and, in fact, in some areas it's been so essential and crucial that it's wonderful to see how it expanded beyond just our continent but also these concepts that grow around the world; the ideals of democracy and liberty.

In recognition of this contribution, I've introduced this measure S. 2645, The Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area Act of 2006. My partner and colleague from Virginia, Senator Warren is also a co-sponsor, an original co-sponsor, of this and Congressman Frank Wolff who is a passionate, strong, good friend and colleague and leader, also has introduced this with many other Virginians on the House side.

This effort is a means of enhancing, not just the ideas, but the educational awareness of this very historic ground, which I think, when you look at it and see the assets of what has happened there, is a very unique region. It is remarkable in this country and it was such an important formation of our more perfect union. This legislation is designed to maintain the heritage of what is Route 15 and Route 20. It's a corridor that starts in Albemarle County outside of Charlottesville on Route 20, goes north through the Piedmont of Virginia on up through Maryland and finally ending at Gettysburg and Pennsylvania. This area, Mr. Chairman, includes six presidential homes, 13 locations on the National Historic Landmark Register, two world heritage sites, 47 historic districts and the largest number of Civil War battle fields. The region contains intrinsic resources including the greatest concentration of rural historic districts in the United States; sites from colonial times, sites from the Civil War and, of course, there are four national parks there.

This effort is not something that has just arisen this year. It's a 10 year joint public-private sector initiative. And I know Cate Magennis Wyatt will be testifying here this afternoon, for her work with the National Park Service to conserve and promote the historic resources within this region. The designation of this heritage area will consist of an outstanding grassroots effort which is comprised of over 150 organizations, nearly every single governing board of supervisors, town council, borough council throughout the approximate 175 mile corridor. There are some examples of this in Virginia in the Shenandoah Valley where there were a lot of battles during the war between the States; different counties, cities and communities worked together to have a way of presenting the various battles that raged in the 1860's in the Shenandoah Valley.

Now this legislation, though, is more than just the Civil War, this is, in fact, was even before the Revolutionary War. This legislation will ensure that future generations will be able to trace the old Iroquois and Sasequahatic Indian Trading routes. Also to recognize the battles and tragic bloodshed that transpired on many Civil War battle fields. They'll be able to reflect on the formation of our American Republic through the homes of Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, and James Madison.

Our young citizens will learn from journeys and when you have a journey it is also a great way to have families take a trip, and you can follow where you're going and tell stories and try to imagine what things were like in the 1700's or the 1800's in these areas. And I think what young people are going to learn is that leadership emanates from personal choices, and our choices are within the control of each and every one of us, and so is the leadership; the people and the decisions and choices that people made to the challenges they faced in those times. So this Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, I think, is going to enhance

preservation. It's truly going to enhance education, and moreover, heritage tourism, a big part of these communities, and it's going to help, I think, with jobs and historic preservation.

Finally, this has come up, and it has to do with one of the most important rights we have in our free and just society, and that's private ownership of property. The preservations of our country's heritage is important, as are our Constitutionally protected rights, including private ownership of property.

This bill does more than any other heritage bill passed by Congress that I've seen to date to include language clearly recognizing those property rights. The introduced language provides that nothing in this legislation, in any way, alters State or local land use policies or provides no new eminent domain powers whatsoever. So, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation during this Congress, it would be great to get this done before the 400 anniversary of the founding of Jamestown. We've heard this before, that Captain John Smith water trail—we want to have all America come home to Virginia which is the cradle of American Liberty, and the first permanent English settlement and to do this I think will enhance not just Virginia, this will be beneficial for Maryland, for Pennsylvania, but most importantly, I think, for the Nation, not just for 2007, but for generations to come, and I thank you, again, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing and your consideration of this important legislation.

Senator THOMAS. Okay. Thank you very much, Senator. I welcome Deputy Director Don Murphy from the National Park Service, and our other witnesses on today's hearing. Our purpose is to receive testimony on five Senate bills having to do with national heritage: S. 574, S. 1387, S. 1721, S. 2037, and S. 2645.

So now let me turn to the Senator from Colorado, and then we'll go to Mr. Murphy.

**STATEMENT OF HON. KEN SALAZAR, U.S. SENATOR  
FROM COLORADO**

Senator SALAZAR. Thank you very much, Senator Thomas, for holding this hearing on these important bills that are before the committee. I appreciate your leadership not only on these bills but also your leadership concerning our National Park System. The bill S. 2037, which is the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Act, will help protect the extraordinary cultural and natural resources of the San Luis Valley in Colorado, my native valley.

I want to welcome today to our hearing, Ann Marie Velasquez, who has been the lead organizer of this project in Colorado, and I'd also like to welcome a number of people who have traveled a long ways from Colorado to be here from Alamosa, Costilla and other counties. Your attendance is a testament as to the strength of this national heritage area proposal.

As a native son of the San Luis Valley, I know how hard the peoples of the region have fought to protect their traditions, their language, their art and architecture, and the stories of their ancestors. They have fought to protect treasured grasslands, the Great Sand Dunes, the waterways and the mountain peaks of the valley. They have fought to protect a rural way of life that cherishes family, faith and hard work. Sadly, they also paid a price for guarding

their rural way of life. Costilla and Conejos Counties are two of the four poorest counties in the United States of America. Young people often must leave the valley to find the jobs and opportunities that they seek elsewhere. What the valley lacks in financial riches, it more than makes up for in its natural and cultural treasures.

Mr. Chairman, the land, traditions, and history of the valley are of the San Luis Valley are of such importance to the story and identity of America that they deserve national designation and protection.

Since people first settled in the San Luis Valley over 11,000 years ago, the cultures, lifestyles and the cosmologies of the valley settlers have converged, conflicted and coalesced through the centuries. The region was dubbed "The Land of the Blue Sky People," in honor of the Utes, the oldest continuous residents of which is now Colorado. It is the home of Mount Blanca, the sacred mountain that, according to folklore, marks the eastern boundary of the Navajo world. Seventeenth century Spanish which is still spoken by about 35 percent of the population of the region testifies to the strong influence of this—of the original New Mexican settlers into the southern part of Colorado. And the Narrow Gauge railroads the Rio Grande Railroad recall America's era of westward expansion.

The valley's natural wonders are many and the designation of the national heritage area would, in fact, be a significant statement about the importance of the heritage of this peaceful area.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for holding this hearing and for allowing the presentation to be made on this proposed heritage area. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Senator Salazar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. KEN SALAZAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM COLORADO

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Akaka. I appreciate you holding this hearing on S. 2037, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Act, which would help protect the extraordinary cultural and natural resources of the San Luis Valley in Colorado.

I want to welcome Ann Marie Velasquez, who has been the lead organizer of this project in Colorado. And I would like to welcome the large group of county commissioners and community leaders from Conejos, Alamosa, and Costilla counties who have traveled so far to join us here today. Your attendance is a testament to the strength of this National Heritage Area proposal.

As a native son of the San Luis Valley, I know how hard the peoples of the region have fought to protect their traditions, their language, their art and architecture, and the stories of their ancestors. They have fought to protect treasured ranchlands, sand dunes, waterways, and mountain peaks. And they have fought to protect a rural way of life that cherishes family, faith, and hard work.

Sadly, they have also paid a price for guarding their rural way of life. Costilla and Conejos Counties are two of the four poorest counties in America. Young people often must leave the Valley to find the jobs and opportunities they seek.

What the Valley lacks in financial riches it more than makes up for in its natural and cultural treasures. Mr. Chairman, the land, traditions, and history of the San Luis Valley are of such importance to the story and identity of America that they deserve national designation and protection.

Since people first settled in the San Luis Valley over 11,000 years ago, the cultures, lifestyles, and cosmologies of the Valley's settlers have converged, conflicted, and coalesced through the centuries. The region was dubbed "The Land of the Blue Sky People" in honor of the Utes, the oldest continuous residents of what is now Colorado. It is the home of Mount Blanca, the sacred mountain that, according to folklore, marks the eastern boundary of the Navajo world. Seventeenth century Spanish, still spoken by about 35% of the population of the Sangre de Cristo region, testifies to the strong influence of Hispano settlers, while the narrow gauge rails of the Rio Grande Railroad recall America's era of westward expansion.

The San Luis Valley's natural wonders attract visitors from around the world. The Valley is home to three National Wildlife Refuges, fifteen State Wildlife Refuges, a National Forest, two National Forest Wilderness Areas, and the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. Anyone who hikes the area's peaks, watches its wildlife, or rides on its ranches will tell you that this region is a crown jewel of the American landscape.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the concept of a National Heritage Area can be, in places like the San Luis Valley, an excellent way for the federal government to support local, consensus-based approaches to land management. I also agree with you that we need a coherent system for designating and managing these heritage areas.

For this reason, I wrote this bill as if your bill, S. 243, which creates standards for National Heritage Area designations, were law. The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Act includes strong protections for private property, is based on a sound study of the national significance of the area, gives firm guidance to the management entity, and provides clear direction for how the federal government may support the project.

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Act also fulfills the criteria that the Park Service has established for determining whether a project is worthy of designation, and I look forward to hearing more about this in Mr. Murphy's testimony.

I particularly want to note the leadership that the local community has shown over the past four years in building support for the project, studying the region's resources, and assembling a plan for protecting these resources demonstrates that this will be a permanent, successful, and self-sufficient project. The list of local governments, organizations, state agencies, and individuals supporting this project is remarkable, as Ms. Velasquez will attest.

Mr. Chairman, for generations the peoples of the San Luis Valley have worked hard to be good stewards of their land and water and to preserve their culture and rural way of life. They are looking for our help now to protect a place that is central to Colorado's peoples, emblematic of the Western landscape, and at the core of the American experience.

I hope we can honor the contributions of the San Luis Valley to our Nation's heritage by designating the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you.

Mr. Murphy, would you care to comment, please?

**STATEMENT OF DONALD W. MURPHY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR,  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Senator Allen, Senator Salazar. I'm Donald Murphy, Deputy Director of the National Park Service, and I would like to open my statement by saying my official testimony is in the record, and I hope you'll except my official testimony that has been placed in the record.

Senator THOMAS. It will be in the record.

Mr. MURPHY. A recent National Park System Advisory Board report, entitled "Charting a Future for National Heritage Areas," recognized the important role of national heritage areas and expanding conservation, stewardship and identifying and preserving significant historic resources. The report also recognized that national heritage areas need a legislative foundation that frames and supports this approach. So the national heritage area program legislation sponsored here in the Senate, by Chairman Thomas, S. 243 that passed the Senate last year and is supported by the Department would provide that framework, and that's very important to the National Park Service for the future management of these heritage areas.

I'll take each bill in turn and present the Department's positions on those bills.

First, S. 574 that would extend the termination date for Federal funding to the Quinebaug and Shetucket River Valley National

Heritage Corridor from September 2009 to September 2027, and increase the ceiling on appropriations from \$10 million to \$20 million. The Department does not support enactment of this bill, since extending the Federal financial commitment to this heritage area is not in keeping with the program legislation framework that I just referred to. Under its existing organization the area will continue to receive annual Federal funding for 3 more years. And we would recommend that the area begin to evaluate on how it will sustain its efforts to protect resources when Federal funding ends in 2009.

Now, turning to the S. 1387 that would reauthorize the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for a period of 10 years. It would provide an update of the management plan, authorize a special resource study, authorize additional appropriations for the corridor for operations and development, and increase the membership of the commission. The Department is not able to support the enactment of S. 1387 as presently drafted, but would support a 5-year reauthorization of the commission with an authorization of one million dollars per year. The Department opposes the authorization of \$10 million in additional development funds. However, we do support, enthusiastically, this special resource study. The Department also recommends that the bill be amended to include an update of the management plan that would require identifying a successor, non-Federal management entity for the corridor comprised of a board with broad, regional representation. The updated plan should also provide the schedule and manner in which the transition of the management of the corridor will occur by the end of the five-year reauthorization period.

And finally, the plan should provide information on how the heritage corridor will be financially self-sufficient as its work continues during the 5-year reauthorization period.

Now turning to S. 1721, the National Heritage Area Extension Act, which has four titles. And, based on the complexity and the varied nature of these titles, the Department would like to present our position on each of the titles separately.

Title I would extend the authority for nine national heritage areas to receive Federal funds for an additional 15 years. It would increase the authorization ceiling from \$10 million to \$20 million per area, and would make several amendments to the authorizing legislation for three of these areas.

Although the Department supports the proposed minor amendments to the three heritage areas, we do not support reauthorizing Federal assistance to all nine heritage areas for an additional 15 years or increasing their authorization ceilings.

In title II, it would reauthorize the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route, which is an affiliated area of the National Park System, and is not a national heritage area. It will eliminate the \$4 million appropriation ceiling and will require the completion of a strategic plan by the Secretary. The Department supports this title, if amended to increase the authorization ceiling to \$8 million instead of eliminating it altogether, to extend the reauthorization date of the trail route until May 2009. And to require that this strategic plan be done in partnership with the State.

Title III would reauthorize the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for a period of 20 years, provide an update of the management plan, authorize additional appropriations for operations and development, and increase the membership of the commission. The Department does not support this title as currently drafted, but would support reauthorizing the commission for a 5-year period, and updating the management plan to identify a successor, non-Federal management entity for the corridor, comprised of a board with a broad, regional representation. We also recommend that a new subsection be added that requires a special resources study to be completed. And the Department would oppose authorizing \$10 million in development funds.

Finally, title IV, would designate the Mississippi River National Heritage Area across ten States and authorize appropriations of \$2 million a year, not to exceed \$20 million overall. The Department isn't able to support enactment of this title and would recommend that the title be amended to authorize an updated study instead.

Turning to S. 2037, to establish the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area of Colorado. The bill would establish that the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area to recognize the outstanding and nationally significant, natural, cultural and scenic recreational resources found within the San Luis Valley of Colorado.

While a feasibility study has determined that the area is appropriate for designation, the Department recommends that the committee defer action on S. 2037 until program legislation is enacted, that establishes guidelines for process of designation with national heritage areas.

I want to hasten to add that we thought the feasibility study was an excellent feasibility study, that it met all of the criteria and this area's clearly recognized by the National Park Service as being superior in nature. We simply feel that it's important to have the program management legislation implemented before establishing any new heritage areas.

With S. 2037 we recommend that the bill be amended to remove paragraph 5(d)(2), which would require 100% Federal funding prior to completion of the management plan and to change the termination authority in section 10 to expire 15 years after enactment.

These amendments would make S. 2037 consistent with other similar national heritage area establishment bills.

Now turning to S. 2645, Designation of A Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area. S. 2645 would establish "A Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area" across 175 miles along Route 15 and part of Route 20. We recognize that this is an extremely significant route. I live not far from that route in Spotlvania County right in the middle of wilderness battlefield. I often travel to Almerow County because I teach at the Federal Executive Institute.

My family owns property not far from there that's been in our family for nearly 100 years, and I'll be going there this weekend with my great-cousin, as a matter of fact, and have great affection for that area. However, in its current form the Department does not support enactment of this bill at this time. Before a national heritage area is designated by Congress, a comprehensive feasibility study is required that evaluates an area using a criteria de-

veloped by the Department and Congress. And although a study undertaken by “A Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership” is a very good beginning step in looking at the resources in the region, it doesn’t fully address the required criteria for the designation of national heritage areas.

I am happy to report, however, that we have been meeting on a regular basis with the sponsors of this legislation. Our National Park Service staff just recently met with Cate, again, this week, and we have a follow-up meeting after this hearing to make sure the group understands the criteria that we believe have not been met yet. And so they can continue to work with us, to make sure that the study meets the National Park Service criteria.

Additionally, if the bill moves forward, the Department would recommend that two provisions be removed from the bill; one requiring the compact, and one that authorizes Federal funds for land acquisition. So we’re fully prepared to provide advice to the partnership to assist in completing the feasibility study that meets our professional standards, and provides Congress with the necessary information and assessment upon which to base its decisions regarding the designation in the future.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony. I’ll be happy to take questions.

[The prepared statements of Mr. Murphy follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DONALD W. MURPHY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, NATIONAL  
PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

S. 574

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 574, a bill to amend the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor Act of 1994. The Department does not support enactment of this bill.

The Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor, also known as The Last Green Valley, was authorized in 1994 and comprised 25 communities in northeastern Connecticut. It began receiving federal funding in 1996 and in its first four years of operation, it received \$200,000 per year. It became the first national heritage area to be managed by a non-profit organization, the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc. Its first plan, *Vision to Reality: A Management Plan*, was completed in 1997.

In 1999, the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor (QSHC) was expanded to include 10 additional communities in its watershed in Connecticut and Massachusetts, making it the second bi-state national heritage area in the country. At the same time, its original seven-year authorization was extended through 2009 and a new ceiling of \$10,000,000 was authorized with an annual amount not-to-exceed \$1,000,000, in keeping with other similar national heritage areas. At that time, *Vision 2010: A Plan for the Next Ten Years* was completed, along with the *Interpretive Initiative for the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor*. With the additional federal investment and larger regional focus, many successful programs were initiated. Appropriations from FY 1996 through FY 2006 have totaled \$5,581,000.

S. 574 would increase the ceiling on appropriations to the QSHC from \$10,000,000 to \$20,000,000 and extend the termination date of the Secretary of the Interior’s financial commitment from September 30, 2009 to September 30, 2027 which is inconsistent with the national heritage area program legislation passed by the Senate last year and supported by the Administration.

With regard to that legislation, a recent National Park System Advisory Board report *Charting a Future for National Heritage Areas* recognized that national heritage areas need a legislative foundation that frames and supports the important role of national heritage areas in expanding conservation stewardship and in identifying and preserving significant historic resources. The national heritage area program legislation (S. 243) that passed the Senate last year and is supported by the Depart-

ment would provide such a framework. The program legislation authorizes the Secretary to provide financial assistance to national heritage areas for a period not to exceed 15 years after an area is designated by Congress. Local coordinating entities that prepare and implement the management plan for the national heritage area could receive up to \$1 million per year, not to exceed \$10 million over the 15-year period. Prior to the end of the 15-year period, an evaluation and report would be required on the accomplishments, sustainability, and recommendations for the future of each national heritage area. Extending the federal financial commitment to this heritage area is not in keeping with this framework.

During the 12 years since designated by Congress, the QSHC has accomplished many partnership-oriented projects related to resource protection and interpretation within the watershed as outlined in the management plan. Under its existing authorization, the area will continue to receive annual federal funding for three more years. As is stated in the program legislation, we would recommend that the area begin to evaluate how it will sustain its efforts to protect resources when federal funding ends in 2009.

The Green Valley Institute (GVI) is a partnership among the QSHC, the University of Connecticut's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and the cooperative extension system of the University of Massachusetts. Its programs are made possible through active partnerships with many additional organizations and communities, and the active involvement of QSHC's Natural Resources and Agriculture Committee. GVI programs specifically target three local audiences: private landowners; municipal leaders and land use commissioners; and contractors, realtors and others who convert open space to other uses. Now in its fifth year, the work of GVI has been positively recognized with eight state and national awards.

GVI was created to help document, plan for and protect the priceless land-based resources of the region. Its goals are to improve the knowledge base from which land use and natural resources decisions are made, and to build local capacity to protect and manage natural resources as the region grows.

The nearly 1,100-square miles of The Last Green Valley provide a challenge to cohesive and engaging regional interpretation of natural and historical resources. Over the past several years, QSHC has developed a number of interpretive strategies to educate residents and visitors alike, while providing an entertaining base from which to generate tourism. For example, Last Green Valley Ventures is a program that (1) circulates people and information throughout the region; (2) provides adequate visitor services, orientation to The Last Green Valley and interpretation of the many regional themes; (3) assures quality, consistency and hospitality; and (4) collects important statistical data to inform future marketing and programming. The program combines current assets of The Last Green Valley, the compendium of existing research and support brochures, the complimenting businesses offering unique experiences, and partners from public and private sectors into one cohesive product.

Last Green Valley Ventures also dovetails with an on-line educational resources guide, *Valley Quest*, used by regional educators, parents and youth group leaders to educate and inspire the future stewards of the QSHC.

Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc, who manages the heritage corridor and implements the management plan, has distributed \$1.6 million in historic preservation and partnership program grants to municipal governments and non-profits for nearly 200 projects, resulting in the leveraging of \$7 million overall. The grants have built local capacity, revitalized downtown areas, supported trail design and enhancements, improved water quality, supported economic development and tourism, just to name a few.

Local support for the QSHC is evident by the lengthy list of partners in their annual reports that includes entities from all geographic areas and mission areas. QSHC's large grassroots organization consistently has more than 100 people involved in active working committees each month. Each of the 35 towns in the region has signed a voluntary and nonbinding community compact in which the local governments accepted the goals and objectives of the Quinebaug-Shetucket management plan and formalized the towns' commitment to balance conservation and growth in their collective vision for the watershed.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to comment. This concludes my prepared remarks and I will be happy to answer any questions you or other committee members might have.

S. 1387

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 1387, a bill that would

reauthorize the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for a period of 10 years, provide for an update of corridor planning documents, authorize a Special Resource Study, authorize additional appropriations for the corridor for operations and development, and increase the membership of the commission. The Department is unable to support enactment of S. 1387 as presently drafted, but would support a limited reauthorization of the commission. The Department opposes the authorization of \$10 million in additional development funds.

The John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, which has been in existence for 20 years, is considered among the leading national heritage efforts in the nation. The commission that has managed the corridor's programs and projects has made exceptional strides in the preservation and protection of a myriad of resources and in interpreting the rich stories of the "Birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution"—the Blackstone River Valley of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

It was in the Blackstone River Valley at Pawtucket that Samuel Slater, a British immigrant, in concert with Moses Brown developed the first successful textile manufacturing mill that triggered our own industrial revolution, one that continues today. Indeed, the Blackstone River Valley itself became a major center of manufacturing in the United States during the 19th and 20th centuries. Today, largely due to the recognition of the corridor by Congress, and the important work of the commission, the region has seen a rebirth through intelligent and adaptive reuse of previous mills and manufacturing facilities. As residents came to fully understand the nation-changing history of their region, the stories of its people, and its untapped community and economic potential through historic preservation, pride of place and appreciation of shared heritage soon followed.

National heritage areas and historic preservation efforts throughout the country have benefited from the leadership and best practices for which Blackstone is well-known. The commission has and continues to enjoy exceptional support among state and local governments, businesses, private organizations, and the general public of the region.

The National Park Service (NPS) has had a unique relationship with the commission and its innovative and productive work since the corridor was established in November 1986. Consistent with section 4 of the authorizing legislation, the NPS has provided staff to the commission and conducts ranger-led interpretive programs in the corridor. Congress, recognizing this special relationship, has consistently authorized funding for projects in the corridor in the Line Item Construction portion of the NPS budget. The executive director of the commission, a NPS employee, also serves as Superintendent of the Roger Williams National Memorial, a small unit of the National Park System in Providence, Rhode Island.

S. 1387, besides providing for reauthorization of the commission, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a Special Resource Study to determine whether areas in the corridor meet the criteria for congressional designation as a unit of the National Park System. We believe the conduct of such a study is timely and appropriate. It would permit the Secretary to make recommendations to Congress including the future role that NPS may play in the preservation and protection of additional corridor resources.

The National Park System Advisory Board in its recent report entitled *Charting a Future for National Heritage Areas* recognized the important role of national heritage areas in expanding conservation stewardship and in identifying and preserving significant historic resources. The report also recognized that national heritage areas need a legislative foundation that establishes a clear process for designation, administration, and evaluation. The national heritage area program legislation (S. 243) that passed the Senate last year and is supported by the Department also outlined the steps to be followed for success as a national heritage area. Both the Advisory Board report and the proposed legislative framework recommended that prior to consideration for reauthorization, an individual national heritage area should be the subject of a study to determine any future and appropriate level of NPS involvement including, but not limited to, future federal funding. Blackstone is the first heritage area to have followed this process. A study prepared in 2005 by the NPS Conservation Study Institute entitled, *Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future* concluded that there is a clear need to sustain an effective coordinating framework for the corridor and an on-going relationship with the NPS.

The Department believes that S. 1387, if amended, can provide the basis whereby the important work of the commission may continue while providing an opportunity for the NPS and the commission to explore viable alternatives for the future management of heritage resources in the region. This can be accomplished while maintaining the cooperative working relationship that has been the hallmark of our joint

efforts to preserve, protect, and enhance the nationally significant and important resources of the Blackstone River Valley.

The Department recommends that the bill be amended in section 2(d) to only reauthorize the commission for a five-year period, and that the update of the management plan in section 2(c) include a requirement that the plan identify a successor non-Federal management entity for the corridor, comprised of a board with broad regional representation. The updated plan should also provide the schedule and manner in which the transition of the management of the corridor will occur from the present federal commission to a new management entity by the end of the five-year reauthorization period. Finally, the plan should provide information on how the heritage corridor will be financially self-sufficient as its work continues beyond the five-year reauthorization period.

The Department would further recommend that the Special Resource Study authorized in section 2(e) be submitted to the Committee on Resources in the House of Representatives and Committee on Energy and Natural Resources in the Senate no later than 90 days after it is completed instead of the proposed 30-day requirement in order to permit full consideration by the Secretary to make an informed recommendation to Congress. Finally, the Department would recommend that section 2(f) be amended to strike the authorization for \$10 million in development funds in order to be consistent with the appropriation levels of other national heritage areas.

The Department believes that these amendments will permit the John H. Chafee Blackstone National Heritage Corridor Commission to continue its significant contributions to the region while providing the necessary time for transition to a non-federal, locally supported management entity to carry on the commission's valuable work into the future.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony and I am prepared to answer any questions that you or other members of the committee might have at this time.

#### S. 1721

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 1721, the National Heritage Area Extension Act of 2005.

The bill has four titles. Title I would extend the authority for nine national heritage areas to receive federal funds for an additional 15 years. It would increase the authorization ceiling from \$10 million to \$20 million per area, and would make several amendments to the authorizing legislation for three of these areas. Title II would reauthorize the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail, eliminate the \$4,000,000 appropriations ceiling, and require that the Secretary undertake a strategic plan to increase opportunities for participation by the public in the trail route. Title III would reauthorize the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for an additional 20 years, update the management plan, provide for additional commission members to be appointed, authorize an additional \$10 million for the commission, and authorize \$10 million in development funds to the heritage corridor. Title IV would designate the Mississippi River National Heritage Area across 10 states.

Based on the complexity and varied nature of each of these titles, the Department would like to present our position on each title separately.

#### TITLE I—EXTENSIONS AND TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO OMNIBUS PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1996

Title I would extend the authorization for nine national heritage areas, authorized in the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996, from September 30, 2012 to September 30, 2027, and would increase their current appropriations ceiling of \$10 million to \$20 million. It also would make several minor amendments to the authorizing legislation for the National Coal Heritage Area, the South Carolina Heritage Area, and the Ohio & Erie National Heritage Corridor. Although the Department supports the proposed minor amendments to the three heritage areas, we do not support reauthorizing federal assistance to all nine heritage areas for an additional 15 years or increasing their authorization ceilings.

A recent National Park System Advisory Board report *Charting a Future for National Heritage Areas* recognized the important role of national heritage areas in expanding conservation stewardship and in identifying and preserving significant historic resources. The report also recognized that national heritage areas need a legislative foundation that frames and supports this approach. The national heritage area program legislation (S. 243) that passed the Senate last year and is supported by the Department would provide such a framework.

The program legislation authorizes the Secretary to provide financial assistance to national heritage areas for a period not to exceed 15 years after an area is designated by Congress. Local coordinating entities that prepare and implement the management plan for the national heritage area could receive up to \$1 million per year, not to exceed \$10 million over the 15-year period. Prior to the end of the 15-year period, an evaluation and report would be required on the accomplishments, sustainability, and recommendations for the future of each national heritage area. Extending the federal financial commitment to the heritage areas in S. 1721 is not in keeping with this framework. Therefore, the Department does not support section 101(a) of S. 1721.

TITLE II—REAUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR NEW JERSEY COASTAL  
HERITAGE TRAIL ROUTE

Title II would reauthorize the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route, eliminate the \$4,000,000 appropriations ceiling, and require the completion of a strategic plan by the Secretary. The Department supports Title II of S. 1721 with three amendments.

In 1988, the Secretary was authorized to designate a vehicular tour route in coastal New Jersey and to prepare an inventory of sites along the route. An interpretive program was also mandated to provide for public appreciation, education, understanding and enjoyment of important fish and wildlife habitats, geologic and geographical landforms, cultural resources, and migration routes in coastal New Jersey. The Secretary was authorized to provide technical assistance, prepare and distribute information, and erect signs along the route. The trail links national wildlife refuges, national parklands, National Historic Landmarks, and National Register sites with important historic communities, state parks, natural areas, and other resources to tell the story of New Jersey's role in shaping U.S. history and in providing internationally important habitats for bird and other migrations.

The trail, an affiliated area of the National Park System, is a partnership among the National Park Service; the State of New Jersey through its Department of Environmental Protection, Commerce and Economic Growth Commission, and Pinelands Commission; and many local government and private non-profit partners. Through interpretation of five themes (Maritime History, Coastal Habitats, Wildlife Migration, Relaxation & Inspiration, and Historic Settlements), the trail brings attention to important natural and cultural resources along coastal New Jersey. The trail demonstrates the potential of public/private partnerships that allow the National Park Service to meet its core mission of natural and cultural resource preservation along with interpretation and public education in a cost-efficient manner through technical assistance while reducing operational responsibilities.

Reauthorization of the trail would enable the National Park Service to complete implementation of the trail plan, as supported by the public and our partners. Without additional time and funding, the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route will be left incomplete. Implementation of the plan is also critical in building a base of sustainable partners and developing a strategy for the long-term management of the trail. Additionally, commitments to trail partners would go unfulfilled, and many additional natural and cultural resources would not receive the partnership assistance leveraged by the trail.

The strategic plan authorized in S. 1721 would be an important tool to help the trail develop a long-term management strategy that includes creating a self-sustaining funding mechanism that does not depend indefinitely on operational funding from the National Park Service. To this end, we would recommend that the title be amended to increase the authorization ceiling by an additional \$4 million only instead of eliminating the ceiling altogether. We also would recommend an amendment to require this strategic plan to be done in partnership with the State. Also, because the reauthorization extension proposed in section 201 of S. 1721 has already passed (May 2006), we would recommend that section 6(c) of Public Law 100-515 be amended to change "12" to "15" thus extending the reauthorization date until May 2009.

TITLE III—JOHN H. CHAFEE BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

Title III would reauthorize the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for an additional 20 years, authorize an additional \$10 million over 20 years to support the commission, expand the commission from 19 to 25 members, require an update of the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan, and authorize \$10 million over 10 years in development funds for the heritage corridor. The Department does not support Title III of S. 1721 as currently

drafted, which is not in keeping with the framework of the heritage area program legislation supported by the Department.

Designated 20 years ago as only the second national heritage area in the country, the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor celebrates the “Birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution”—the Blackstone River Valley of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The commission that has managed the corridor’s programs and projects has made exceptional strides in the preservation and protection of a myriad of resources and in interpreting the rich stories of the Industrial Revolution in our nation.

It was in the Blackstone River Valley at Pawtucket that Samuel Slater, a British immigrant, in concert with Moses Brown developed the first successful textile manufacturing mill that triggered our own industrial revolution, one that continues today. Indeed, the Blackstone River Valley itself became a major center of manufacturing in the United States during the 19th and 20th centuries. Today, largely due to the recognition of the corridor by Congress, and the important work of the commission, the region has seen a rebirth through intelligent and adaptive reuse of previous mills and manufacturing facilities. As residents came to fully understand the nation-changing history of their region, the stories of its people, and its untapped community and economic potential through historic preservation, pride of place and appreciation of shared heritage soon followed.

The Department would recommend that Title III, section 303 be amended to only reauthorize the commission for a five-year period, and that the update of the management plan in section 302 include a requirement that the plan identify a successor non-Federal management entity for the corridor, comprised of a board with broad regional representation. The updated plan should also provide the schedule and manner in which the transition of the management of the corridor will occur from the present federal commission to a new management entity by the end of the five-year reauthorization period. Finally, the plan should provide information on how the heritage corridor will be financially self-sufficient as its work continues beyond the five-year reauthorization period.

The Department would also recommend that a new subsection be added that requires a Special Resources Study to be completed to determine whether any areas within the corridor meet the criteria for congressional designation as a unit of the National Park System. We believe the conduct of such a study is timely and appropriate. It would permit the Secretary to make recommendations to Congress including the future role that National Park Service may play in the preservation and protection of corridor resources. And finally, the Department would recommend that section 304 be amended to strike the authorization for \$10 million in development funds in order to be consistent with the appropriations levels of other national heritage areas.

#### TITLE IV—MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Title IV would designate the Mississippi River National Heritage Area consisting of all counties and parishes that border the Mississippi River, it would designate a non-profit organization, the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, as the management entity, it would require the development of a management plan for the heritage area, and authorize appropriations of \$2 million a year not to exceed \$20 million overall. The Department does not support enactment of this title, and would recommend that the title be amended to authorize an updated study instead.

The Mississippi River Corridor Study Commission was established by Congress in 1990 to study and determine the feasibility of designating the river corridor as a national heritage area. The study was completed in 1995 and recommended a national heritage area designation although a number of private residents were vocally against this effort based on concerns of federal control in local issues. Because this study was completed over 10 years ago before the criteria contained in our heritage area program legislation was developed, there are several key criteria that have not been evaluated including the extent of grassroots civic engagement, a boundary map for the heritage area, environmental compliance, a business plan, and financial commitments from partners. In addition, the management entity designated in this title was not one of the three groups evaluated in the 1995 study. Also, this title would authorize the heritage area to receive double the normal amount of appropriations for other current national heritage areas and there is no sunset provision for this funding.

The Mississippi River story is one that spans many centuries, cultures, lifeways and economies. It continues to draw people to its banks, waterways and communities. A National Park Service unit now exists in the Minnesota region of the Mississippi River, offering a knowledgeable perspective based on their experience within

a small section of the river as an active partner. We recommend the Mississippi River feasibility study now in existence be updated to address current public, compliance, and management needs based on the current heritage area criteria and guidelines.

#### CONCLUSION

Over the past 20 years, the process for designating national heritage areas has evolved from its early stages where Congress was establishing these on an area-by-area basis with no standardized criteria, study requirements or guidelines, to a much more uniform process that still ensures each area retains its unique characteristics, resources, themes, and partnership structure. The National Park System Advisory Board's report and the national heritage area program legislation (S. 243) that passed the Senate last year and is supported by the Department, would provide a framework that establishes a national heritage area system, and sets criteria and guidelines for studies and designations to enable all parties to do a better job of evaluating and designating the national heritage areas of the future. Reauthorizing existing heritage areas for 15 or more years without the benefit of an assessment of the accomplishments and needs for sustainability, or supporting new designations that are not based upon the completion of comprehensive feasibility studies that adequately address our criteria, does not help the national heritage area program to succeed and thrive.

According to the Advisory Board report, national heritage areas are an important direction in conservation and historic preservation and are founded on consensus-based planning, local commitments, and a network of long-term partnerships. As the individual areas approach the termination of their funding authorization, they need to plan for future options to sustain the partnerships and program beyond reauthorizing the area for an additional fifteen years of funding. Through advance planning, new partnerships can be forged that sustain the heritage area approach and honor the legislative commitment of financial support.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to comment. This concludes my prepared remarks and I will be happy to answer any questions you or other committee members might have.

#### S. 2037

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 2037, a bill to establish the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area in the State of Colorado.

While a feasibility study has determined that the area is appropriate for designation, we recommend that the Committee defer action on S. 2037 until program legislation is enacted that establishes guidelines and a process for designation of national heritage areas. The National Park System Advisory Board in its recent report entitled, *Charting a Future for Heritage Areas* recognized the important role of National Heritage Areas in expanding conservation stewardship and in identifying and preserving significant historic resources. The report also recognized that National Heritage Areas need a legislative foundation that establishes a clear process for designation, administration, and evaluation. Last year, the Senate passed national heritage area program legislation that is supported by the Department. The Administration is working on a similar legislative proposal this year, and we look forward to continuing to work with Congress on this very important issue.

S. 2037 would establish the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area (NHA) to recognize the outstanding and nationally significant natural, cultural, scenic and recreational resources found within the San Luis Valley of Colorado.

S. 2037 contains safeguards to protect private property, including a prohibition on the use of federal funds to acquire real property. The bill proposes no new restrictions with regard to public use and access to private property.

S. 2037 designates the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Board of Directors as the management entity and outlines their duties. The Board represents a broad spectrum of the valley's residents, organizations, and agencies that were involved in the planning for the NHA. The bill also authorizes the development of a management plan within three years of enactment and authorizes the use of federal funds to develop and implement that plan. If the plan is not submitted within three years of enactment of this Act, the Heritage Area becomes ineligible for federal funding until a plan is submitted to the Secretary. Additionally, the Secretary may, at the request of the management entity, provide technical assistance and enter into cooperative agreements with other public and private entities.

Exceeding 7,700 feet in elevation, the San Luis Valley is flanked by the Sangre de Cristo and San Juan Mountains and the geology and climatology within the valley have contributed to the formation of America's tallest Sand Dunes, part of Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve.

The Rio Grande, the second largest river in North America, has its headwaters within the proposed NHA and twists its way through the San Luis Valley on a 1,900-mile journey, offering outstanding scenic and recreational opportunities, including trout fishing, rafting, and tubing. The availability of water in this largely arid and alpine environment tends to concentrate the abundant wildlife in highly visible and public preserves creating exceptional wildlife and bird watching opportunities.

The area's rich natural resources include one National Park, three National Wildlife Refuges, one National Forest, two National Forest Wilderness Areas, six Areas of Critical Environmental Concern administered by the Bureau of Land Management, and 15 State Wildlife Areas. The cultural resources associated with the proposed national heritage are equally impressive. The abundant natural resources of the San Luis Valley may have been inhabited by native peoples including the Ute, Navajo, Apache, Tiwa, Tewa, Comanche, Kiowa, and Arapaho for more than 12,000 years.

More recently, the San Luis Valley served as a crossroads for European exploration and settlement. Spanish explorers and Franciscan priests first entered the valley in 1776 in an attempt to strengthen Spain's weak hold on her remote empire. Captain Zebulon Montgomery Pike camped in the shadows of the Sangre de Cristo Range along the banks of the Conejos River and was captured by Spanish soldiers, arrested for trespassing on Spanish soil, and escorted to Mexico for questioning. His campsite is commemorated as a National Historic Landmark along with 22 other properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Extensive Mexican land grants triggered the initial settlement of the area as families from northern New Mexico found enough water to support their sheep and water their crops. The proposed NHA contains the oldest continuously occupied town in Colorado, (San Luis), the oldest parish (Our Lady of Guadalupe), the oldest church (San Acacio), and the first water right (San Luis People's Ditch).

The Hispanic cultural traditions associated with this first wave of European settlement can still be found in this isolated and predominately agricultural region of Colorado where a version of 17th century Spanish is still spoken by about 35% of the population.

The feasibility of recognizing the area's impressive cultural and natural resources as a national heritage area was the subject of a study produced in 2005 by two grassroots organizations, the Los Amigos Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway, in conjunction with the Sangre de Cristo NHA Steering Committee.

The feasibility study was largely based upon the results of a symposium held in the fall of 2002 where scientists, historians, and anthropologists from interested colleges as well as local ranchers, community leaders, and tribal elders presented papers on the history, natural resources and local culture of the San Luis Valley. The feasibility study identified four interpretive themes for the NHA and addressed the ten interim criteria that the National Park Service has developed for designation of national heritage areas. The study concluded that the area's cultural and natural resources met those criteria.

All local governments within the proposed area have passed resolutions in support of the establishment of the proposed NHA. Moreover, State and federal land managers within the proposed NHA have expressed a willingness to work with the management entity in accomplishing their congressionally authorized conservation and education responsibilities.

At such time as S. 2037 moves forward, we recommend that the bill be amended to remove paragraph 5(d)(2) which would require 100 percent federal funding prior to completion of the management plan and to change the termination authority in Section 10 to expire 15 years after enactment. In addition, we would like to work with the Subcommittee to ensure that the management planning process is coordinated with the affected federal land management entities. These amendments would make S. 2037 consistent with other, similar, national heritage area establishment bills.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared remarks. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

S. 2645

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 2645, a bill to establish

the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area. The Department does not support enactment of this bill at this time.

Before a national heritage area is designated by Congress, a comprehensive feasibility study should be completed that evaluates an area using criteria developed by the Department and Congress. Although the study undertaken by the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership is a good beginning step in looking at the resources in the region, it does not fully address the required criteria for designation of national heritage areas. We believe the bill should not be enacted until an adequate feasibility study is completed that yields the necessary information to demonstrate that the proposed national heritage area meets the criteria for designation. We also believe that individual bills proposing to designate new national heritage areas should be deferred until program legislation is enacted by Congress.

The proposed Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area would span a region of approximately 175 miles along Route 15 and part of Route 20, from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania through Maryland and West Virginia to Charlottesville, Virginia. The region is rich in historic and natural resources including the homes of Presidents Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, and Dwight David Eisenhower, and includes significant Revolutionary and Civil War sites. Revolutionary War sites include Willow Grove, the temporary headquarters of Generals Wayne and Muhlenberg, Point of Fork Arsenal, Castle Hill, home of colonial leader Dr. Thomas Walker, and the Hessian Barracks, used as a prison for British soldiers. Civil War sites include the battlefields of Gettysburg, Monocacy, Antietam, Brandy Station, and Manassas, among others. The region is also crossed by numerous historic trails and byways relating to the Civil War and other scenic resources. All told, there are an estimated 7,000 buildings in the area listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 13 National Historic Landmarks, and 2 World Heritage Sites.

S. 2645 would establish the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area and designate the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership (Partnership) as the local management entity. The Partnership is a nonprofit corporation that has conducted a significant number of public meetings, an important requirement for evaluating local support for the designation of a national heritage area. The bill prescribes the duties of the management entity, provides for the Secretary and the Partnership to enter into a compact, requires the development of a management plan by the Partnership to be approved by the Secretary, and includes a 15-year authorization for up to \$1 million dollars per year not to exceed a total of \$10 million.

Both Congress and the Department have long agreed that a national heritage area designation should be predicated on the completion of a feasibility study that adequately addresses criteria to determine that a proposed national heritage area will enjoy not only public support, but other equally important factors that are necessary for the future success of the area, such as the financial capability to carry out the management plan.

The Department has had the opportunity to review a feasibility study undertaken by the Partnership. We find that the study, while a good first step, fails to address many of the criteria and does not permit an informed decision regarding the feasibility of designating this proposed national heritage area. The report does not adequately address proposed heritage area themes, does not contain any information regarding integrity of resources, nor does it provide an in-depth analysis of management alternatives for the region's resources. The study does not provide any information regarding financial planning and capability, potential sources of matching funds, or specific local commitments to ensure the viability of the programs and activities normally associated with heritage areas. Of concern, too, is the absence of any defined boundary within which federal funding would be targeted.

In addition, the Department has several concerns with some of the language contained in S. 2645. First, section 4 of the bill calls for the Secretary and the Partnership to enter into a compact to delineate the boundaries of the heritage area, discuss heritage area goals and objectives, and explain the proposed approach to conservation and interpretation. Although compacts were found in many of the older national heritage areas designated, over the past 10 years they have been replaced by a requirement to complete a feasibility study that includes this information. We strongly believe that these tasks are key components of a feasibility study and must precede designation.

Second, we note that section 5(a)(2)(D) provides that funds authorized under the legislation to the management entity may be used to acquire lands and interests in land, while section 5(e) prohibits the use of such funds for acquisition of real property or any interest therein. We recommend that section 5(a)(2)(D) be removed from the bill, since it is inconsistent with past heritage area statutes, which prohibit the use of federal funds authorized for heritage areas to be used for land acquisition.

The Department has consistently taken the position that proposed national heritage areas follow the proven path of those achieving designation in recent years. A recent National Park System Advisory Board report *Charting a Future for National Heritage Areas* recognized the important role of national heritage areas in expanding conservation stewardship and in identifying and preserving significant historic resources. The report also recognized that national heritage areas need a legislative foundation that sets specific criteria for designation demonstrated by the completion of an adequate feasibility study. The national heritage area program legislation (S. 243) that passed the Senate last year and is supported by the Department outlined the steps followed for success as a national heritage area. That path is always charted by the completion of a comprehensive feasibility study that provides the Department and Congress with an evaluation of the financial, programmatic, and tangible community support and commitment capabilities of the local management entity. Without information regarding those key ingredients, we are unable to support this bill. We are, however, fully prepared to provide advice to the Partnership to assist it in completing a national heritage area feasibility study that meets our professional standards and provides Congress with the necessary information and assessment upon which to base its decision regarding designation in the future.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony and I am prepared to answer any questions that you or other members of the committee might have at this time.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you very much. Since you gentlemen have bills here of particular interests, if you have questions, you can go first, and if we could make it rather short, I'd appreciate it.

Senator Allen : Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Murphy, you have an enviable job, I admire the fact that you have to come here and testify against every single bill on the docket. That's okay. It's getting closer than, of course, the last one. I think the one in Colorado will pass the most muster, but ours seem to do alright.

I actually appreciate the work you're doing. It's not an easy job that you have, you have to stick to standards and principles, and I think that some of the recommendations that you have made in the scrutiny of our legislation are very good. There may be some inconsistencies, and I appreciate that. Everything can be improved, that's been the nature of our country and certainly with legislation here.

I'm also pleased to hear that you recognize the important work that's been done by the private sector, this partnership, because not every one of these studies needs to be a congressional study, we ought to encourage, I think, as a government, the private sector to take initiative on their own, rather than waiting around for the Government or Congress to command agencies to do the work. I'm also encouraged to hear that you are working with Cate Magennus Wyatt and others involved in this effort.

Do you, in your opinion, and I do want to make this quite clear, I don't want to have a bill bypassing something that would not meet the criteria. But, in your opinion, your professional opinion, if amendments are made, which are reasonable, others and certain things better defined, do you believe that this area would qualify for a national heritage area?

Mr. MURPHY. Yes. I did take the time to read all of the material and the documentation in as much of the report as I could for this meeting, and in my, you know, professional judgment, and based upon other heritage areas that I've seen, it certainly would qualify once it's gone through the proper processes and we've seen a feasibility study that meets the criteria. But on the face of it, on the surface, with, of course, not having the benefit of having it com-

pleted, a completed feasibility study, it certainly appears that it does.

Senator ALLEN. Now, would you contemplate that this could be resolved say, in a matter of months, or would you think some of the criteria that need to be met are going to take a longer period of time to satisfy the criteria of your service?

Mr. Murphy. A lot of the timing, you know, depends upon not only the kind of criteria that still has to be met, it's also getting a consultant on board, and when they can start work and that sort of thing. Some of those variables we don't have control over, of course. But we will be meeting subsequent to this hearing with the sponsors, and with Cate, to determine exactly what the timing will be. I don't expect that it'll be more within months. I certainly don't expect it to take longer than that.

Senator ALLEN. Thank you, Mr. Murphy, and I thank you for your service, your diligence, adherence to the law and also willingness to work with all of us to achieve this goal, and I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator THOMAS. Mr. Salazar.

Senator SALAZAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This doesn't happen to me very often, here in the U.S. Senate, Mr. Chairman, but there is a wonderful Republican in the audience who's a county commissioner in my native county of the San Luis Valley, who's family and my family have shared the same water and the same water rights out of a ditch that has an appropriation date of May 15, 1857. His name is Commissioner Bagwell and his family and my family go back for several generations, and I would just like to point out that he is in Washington today testifying on behalf of this bill.

Senator THOMAS. Welcome. He's a Republican you say?

Senator SALAZAR. We have some wonderful Republicans in the valley.

Senator THOMAS. You're welcome. Glad to have you here.

Mr. BAGWELL. Same water; we've known each other after all these years enough to give each other diseases.

Senator THOMAS. We ought to have more of that here in Washington.

Senator SALAZAR. And just a comment, Mr. Murphy, and that is I very much appreciate the Park Service and your description of the proposal of the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Area. And I appreciate the fact that you have found the proposal to be superior and that it does, in fact, meet the criteria that you have for the designation for these areas. Sir, it is my hope that we will work to make sure that the proposal does in fact, match-up the requirements of S. 243 sponsored by Senator Thomas so that we can move forward with that designation national heritage area. I appreciate your testimony.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you, I have some questions. I almost left myself out here. Very briefly, because we want to get on with our other folks, but since designating these, I think it was in 1985, how many have evolved to the point where they no longer need Federal funds to operate?

Mr. MURPHY. Well, only one national heritage area, the Illinois and Michigan Canal Corridor, has passed its authorization for Fed-

eral funding. It is now managed by a local non-profit organization. However, a bill has been submitted to authorize additional funding for this area, It's H.R. 938 and it has passed the House and a similar bill which is S. 203 has passed the Senate during the 109th Congress. In addition, the caush la puldra River Corridor's Authority to receive Federal funding has expired even though they have not reached their authorization ceiling. So that's the current status but none has really gotten to the—

Senator THOMAS. How many are there? How many heritage areas, do you remember offhand?

Mr. MURPHY. There are 27.

Senator THOMAS. Twenty-seven?

Mr. MURPHY. Twenty-seven.

Senator THOMAS. Okay. And I don't want anyone to misunderstand, all of us are for heritage areas, but they were not designed to be a part of the Park Service, to be sustained and managed and funded by it. The Park Service helps them get initiated until they became self-sustaining and that's what we're kind of talking about. Was it originally the notion that they would be perpetually funded do you believe?

Mr. MURPHY. Well, in the mid 1980's, when they were forced to establish, the National Parks really had no model to look at for their management so to kind of give a comprehensive answer to Illinois, Michigan, the Blackstone River Valley and the Delaware, Lehigh, canal corridor were all authorized for only a 5-year period with legislative provisions for 5-year extensions. As a 10 year exploration neared, the National Park Service then recognized that more time was needed to complete the management plans of the corridors and supported an additional 10-year reauthorization. But more recently, the national heritage areas were authorized using a standard funding framework, as you know, from the \$10 million for 15 years. So the answer is, you know, is really no, we really didn't anticipate that these would go on forever, and the National Park Service would support that in perpetuity.

Senator THOMAS. You mentioned the Blackstone River areas, I understand there's 14 or 15 Federal employees there now. How many positions are funded by the Park Service?

Mr. MURPHY. All 14 are funded by the National Park Service. That was what the original authorization was for that area was for. So when that particular heritage area was authorized, it authorized the National Park Service to manage that in the 14 positions authorized.

Senator THOMAS. Appears to be funded and managed pretty much by the Park Service. Do you think it can become a unit of the Park Service?

Mr. MURPHY. Well, as I said in my testimony I think there may be areas that are within the heritage area that could qualify for designation as national parks, but that would come out as a result of the feasibility study.

Senator THOMAS. I understand. Well, I thank you very much and I appreciate your work, and as I said I don't want anyone to think for a moment that we don't all think national heritage areas are not very important and they are. But they are basically to be devel-

oped and operated more locally so one would hope that might be the case.

Well, thank you, sir.

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator THOMAS. We'll ask the other folks to come forward, please, for our second panel.

On the second panel we have Dr. Michael Sullivan, director of the Rhode Island Department of Environment Management, Ms. Ann Marie Velasquez, chairman of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area in Colorado; and Cate Wyatt, president of Journey Through Hallowed Grounds, in Virginia; Mr. Dan Rice, president and chief executive officer of the Ohio & Erie Area Canalway Coalition, and Charlene Cutler executive director, and chief executive officer of the Quinebaug-Shetucket area in Connecticut.

Why don't we take them in the order that they were called on. So Dr. Sullivan, if would you begin, sir? By the way, if you could hold your statements down to the 5 minutes, and, if you have further things, they will be put in the record with your statement.

**STATEMENT OF DR. W. MICHAEL SULLIVAN, DIRECTOR,  
RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MAN-  
AGEMENT**

Dr. SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. It's a pleasure and honor to be here and offer not only my support but the support of Donald Carcieri, Governor of the State of Rhode Island. The bill would reauthorize the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for an additional 10 years, but also authorizes, as you know, the appropriations of operationally development funding for the corridor and for a special resource for the study to examine the potential long term responsibilities of the service, and the preservation, interpretation and immigration so that the commission can ultimately, I think, achieve what the chair has referred to.

While, we would respectively disagree with the Service's recommendations to change the legislation, the Blackstone is the only heritage area to have been evaluated against and fully meet the same criteria for national significance that the Park Service now applies to units of the Park System.

The Blackstone is widely recognized as the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. This is where Samuel Slater in 1793 harnessed the river and caused it to become known as the hardest working river in America. It changed the human ecology and the natural ecology of the region bringing thousands of people from farms; brought two segments of my family to the region, and has created a living legacy for all of us. This 46-mile river, which starts in western Massachusetts and comes all the way to Providence, fed the world and had impact on the world. The valley became a model for the industrialization of New England, and beyond. It shaped the history of the American free enterprise, labor, immigration, and environment. It has worked hard, and it deserves the recognition.

There is no better place, Mr. Chairman, to learn about this critical part of American history, than the Blackstone River Valley in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The commission and the Park Service has been doing an exemplary job in forming and working through dozens of partnerships that tell thousands of visitors and valley residents the history. They have helped the people of a once-vibrant region, achieve once again a sense of place and a sense of pride in the past, and have taught thousands of other Americans and visitors about this region. Historic mills and mill worker's houses have been rehabilitated and preserved. The natural landscape has been preserved. My department has had significant and extensive involvement in farms, fields, and once polluted areas are becoming recreational assets again. Migratory fish are returning to the basins and dams that retarded flow to drive this engine.

Against this background, the environmental education, the heritage, and tourism programs are flourishing. All 24 cities and towns of two States have endorsed this program and have been designated by the White House as Preserve America communities.

We are grateful for the significant Federal contribution to this success story. And let me suggest, the partners have been working hard since 1986 and the Federal investment has been matched 22 times over, to the extent of well over \$500 million to date.

The corridor has partnered with 75 different organizations and an array of individuals to accomplish 365 different projects, and the great work of the commission along with the Park Service has been more than matched by the growing legions of volunteers. In this past year alone, there were in excess of 30,000 hours donated to the commission. We think the Blackstone has been a leader and a model for national heritage areas. It is important, I think, to underscore that a unique aggregation of mostly significant historical and natural resources being preserved in this region.

Mr. Chairman, so successful have been these efforts, and the commission's activities have been endorsed, again, by both Governor Carcieri and by 24 different municipalities and thousands of individuals.

I have with us today, and we will leave them with you for the record, you know, voluminous documents from citizens, from communities and others showing the high regard for the commission and its work.

An obvious question is, why would this record of progress in 20 years of commitment, should we have another 10 year authorization of the commission? Well, first, is the commission. And the first reason I would offer for this is the work is not yet done. If the commission were to cease to exist and disappear, there's no existing management entity across these two States in 24 regions that would serve so well in motivating all the communities. The sustainability of this noble experiment, I feel, would come at an end at a critical time where the natural resources are truly beginning to move and continue to eco-develop.

And the second reason goes to the heart of the mission, that John H. Chafee defined here. His vision set ambitious goals for the corridor. I had the good fortune of being on the river on several occasions with him. Few appreciated the magnitude of the challenges, but I think he did. In retrospect, it should not be surprising that it's taken just 20 years to undo much of what took 200 years to achieve.

The agenda for the next decade is detailed in the management plan called for in this bill defines, what I would call, legacy tasks. The first of these would be to develop the——

Senator THOMAS. Can you wind up, please sir, we're going to have to move along.

Dr. SULLIVAN. Yes, yes. The fourth of the major tourism areas, the second would be the completion of the Blackstone Valley Bikeway. In the fourth, really, is the major clean-up, the river. Governor Carcieri will talk about this being fishable, swimmable and playable in 2015.

This special resource study is also going to provide and meet all of the actions of S. 243, and I would submit that. It would meet all the goals, and it would empower you with information you need. That concludes my testimony and when appropriate, Mr. Chairman, I'd be happy to entertain any questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Sullivan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. W. MICHAEL SULLIVAN, DIRECTOR, RHODE ISLAND  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before this committee to offer my strong support for S. 1387. This bill would reauthorize the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for an additional ten years.

It would also authorize appropriations of operational and development funding for the Corridor, and enable us to carry out a Special Resource Study to examine the potential of long-term responsibilities by NPS in the preservation, interpretation and integration of some of the Blackstone Valley's nationally significant resources, such as the Slater Mill Historic Site.

Blackstone is the only heritage area to have been evaluated against and fully meet the same criteria for national significance that the NPS applies to units of the National Park System.

Blackstone is widely recognized as the Birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. It was in the Blackstone Valley for the first time in America that the power of water was successfully harnessed for the industrial production of cotton yarn by Samuel Slater in 1793. Soon the Blackstone became known as the "hardest working river" on the continent. Dozens of mill villages sprouted along its banks, drawing thousands of workers from the surrounding New England countryside, Canada, and soon from distant lands as well. This 46-mile river, and the Blackstone Canal which paralleled it, connected Worcester, MA to Providence, RI, carrying agricultural produce, raw materials, and finished goods to the world. The Blackstone Valley became the model for the industrialization of New England and beyond. Its influence shaped the history of American free enterprise, labor, immigration and ethnicity, and management of the environment. It has worked hard and created a connectedness and linkage for the region.

Mr. Chairman, there is no better place to learn about this critical part of America's history than the Blackstone River Valley of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. And for nearly twenty years the Blackstone Corridor Commission and the National Park Service have been doing an exemplary job, working through dozens of partnerships to tell thousands of visitors and valley residents about that history. They have helped the people of a once-vibrant region that sunk into depression regain their self-confidence and a sense of pride in their past. The rapid decline allowed things to be somewhat frozen in time. Historic mills and mill workers' houses have been preserved and rehabilitated for new residences and businesses. Farmscapes, wetlands, forest habitat and open spaces have been protected or restored. Brownfields and once-polluted waterways are becoming recreational assets. Migratory fish are again finding their way upstream to their ancient spawning areas. Against this background, environmental education and heritage tourism programs are flourishing. Uniquely among heritage areas, all 24 cities and towns in the Blackstone Corridor have been designated by the White House as *Preserve America* communities.

While we are grateful for the significant federal contribution to this success story, Mr. Chairman, let me suggest that Blackstone's partners have more than done their job as well. Since 1986, the federal investment has been matched some 22 times

over by state, local, and private dollars—well over \$500 million to date. The Corridor has partnered with more than 75 governmental agencies, not-for-profits, chambers of commerce, volunteer organizations, and individuals to accomplish some 365 projects within the Corridor. And the great work of the Corridor Commission's staff of NPS professionals has been more than matched by growing legions of volunteers. In 2005 alone, these volunteers contributed over 30,000 hours to Corridor projects and programs! No wonder the NPS has long considered Blackstone to be the leader and model for national heritage areas nationwide.

It is important to underscore, too, that a unique aggregation of nationally significant historical and natural resources are being preserved and interpreted for the benefit of the American people without the costs of federal ownership and direct management, and without threats to private property rights or state and local regulatory powers.

Mr. Chairman, so successful have the corridor commission's activities been that its reauthorization is enthusiastically endorsed by the governors of its two states, the governing bodies of all 24 of its cities and towns, and by hundreds of its citizens. I offer for the committee's review this voluminous documents containing resolutions and letters of support testifying to the high regard in which the commission and NPS are held by Valley residents.

I want now to address the obvious question: Why, with this record of progress and achievement for nearly twenty years—why should Congress reauthorize the commission for another ten years? Mr. Chairman, there are two reasons why this should happen. First, the commission has served as an extremely effective management entity for a region composed of twenty-four cities and towns in two states. Though there may be other management models, I do not believe any could have served so well to create an effective forum for bringing so many disparate entities together around a shared agenda.

Were the commission cease to exist and disappear in November, there is no existing management entity in the Valley, across the States, and municipalities with the stature, breadth, and depth to take its place. The sustainability of this noble experiment would thus be seriously threatened without the continuation of the federal role in this partnership.

The second reason for extending the commission goes to the heart of the Corridor's mission, and our commitment to realize the vision of its namesake and founding father, the late Senator John H. Chafee.

That vision set ambitious goals for the Corridor. As we come to the end of our second ten-year management plan, we must conclude that, despite enormous successes, *we have not finished the job.*

Few appreciated the magnitude of the challenges faced when the commission started its work in 1988. Yet in retrospect it should not be surprising that it has taken only two decades to significantly reverse two hundred years of attitudes and activities that lead to the ecological degradation and a half century of economic decline.

An action agenda for the next decade will be defined in detail in the management plan called for in this bill. But we can clearly see at least three major "legacy" tasks ahead of us:

The first of these tasks is in the area of heritage education and tourism development. With federal seed money and technical assistance, the commission's partners have built and now operate three of four planned "gateway" visitor centers to the Blackstone Valley, but we must see the last and most ambitious of these completed: the Northern Gateway Visitor Center in Worcester. In this project the commission has played and must continue to play the critical role of conceptual planner, convenor, and negotiator to assure coordination among multiple federal, state, local, and non-profit partners.

The second major task is the completion of the 46-mile Blackstone Bikeway, perhaps the most significant joint recreational amenity in the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The Rhode Island segment is nearing completion. Much has been done, but the magnitude of this project will require a continued federal-state partnership effort for the better part of the next decade.

The third major task is to complete the cleanup of the Blackstone River and protect its watershed. The commission and its partners have launched the "Fishable-Swimmable Blackstone by 2015" campaign. Governor Carcneri and I will continue to speak about FISHABLE, SWIMABLE, PLAYABLE and SUSTAINABLE. . . . Narragansett Bay but as the names suggests, no one is underestimating the scope and scale of the challenge we face.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to add a special word in support of this bill's provision for a Special Resource Study. No other heritage area has enjoyed the benefits of such an extensive relationship with NPS as has the Blackstone. From the start,

NPS has provided critical staff to the commission. The commission's Executive Director also serves as Superintendent of Roger Williams National Memorial, an NPS unit in Providence. NPS rangers have led interpretive programs and trained volunteers and docents throughout the Corridor. They have been the seeding agent of interest by local communities. The Special Resource Study would examine this unique relationship and permit the Secretary of the Interior to make recommendation to Congress about the future role NPS might play in preserving and interpreting Corridor resources.

I do not come before this committee without having done our homework. Prior to seeking reauthorization, the commission asked the NPS's Conservation Study Institute to conduct an independent evaluation of the commission's record and look at options for sustaining the Corridor's future. Such a study would be required by the national heritage area program legislation, S. 243, that passed the Senate last year. It is also called for by the National Park System Advisory Board in its recently adopted report entitled *Charting a Future for National Heritage Areas*. I am proud to say that Blackstone is the first heritage area to follow this process. I would like to submit for the committee's review copies of the Blackstone study, entitled *Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future*. I believe that S. 1387, if enacted, would secure that future for the Blackstone Valley and its people.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my testimony, and I am prepared to answer any questions that you or other members of the committee may have at this time.

Senator Thomas. All right. Thank you very much.

Ms. Velasquez.

**STATEMENT OF ANN MARIE VELASQUEZ, SANGRE DE CRISTO NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**

Ms. VELASQUEZ. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I'm Ann Marie Velasquez, and I'm here to testify in support of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. I am the chairman for the emerging board of directors and management entity named in S. 2037. I'd like to thank you for asking me to testify at this hearing. The bill to designate the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is of high importance to this three-county region that lies within the great San Luis Valley of Colorado.

This is evidenced by the number of people who have traveled with me to Washington just to be present at this hearing. The emphasis that I'd like to place on my testimony today, is that of local and regional support for designation of the area as a national heritage area.

Since the beginning, we have sought the support of the residents, organizations, and governments, starting with a public meeting in each county in 2002 for the process of building a steering committee. Today's several of the original steering committee members are still actively involved and have traveled to Washington to be present at this hearing. The steering committee has been responsible for most of the work that has been done so far on the national heritage area designation effort, and in the creation of the feasibility study.

For the past 5½ years, we and others, have had numerous public meetings and have encouraged individuals to become involved on the committee or in other ways.

Individuals from our committee have presented at various meetings and of other non-profits, special interest groups, civic groups, local governments and tourism boards. Resolutions have been received supporting the national heritage area from the counties and communities lying within the proposed region. Numerous letters of support have been obtained from businesses, nonprofit organizations, regional economic development entities and individuals.

Our State Senator and State Representative have also shown their support for the project throughout our efforts. The greatest contributions that have impacted our goal of designation have been the overwhelming personal work effort of professional volunteers.

As I mentioned, countless hours of research have been contributed. That research had its roots in a collaborative scholarly symposium that our steering committee presented in November 2002.

Partnerships with Adam's State College and others were formed to present the full day of multi-venue symposium on history, heritage, culture and natural resources that make up the proposed region. Over 30 percent is donated to research to the national heritage area effort. The final feasibility study was researched and authored almost entirely by local historians, authors, scholars, business people and residents of the proposed region.

This once again shows the overwhelming support for this designation from multitude of people within the valley and around the State of Colorado.

Within the planning process, friendships with our local public land agencies and organizations have been our main focus. And a close working relationship has been established with the Nation's newest national park, the Great Sands National Park and Preserve.

The recognition of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area's three-county region as an important component in America's history is long overdue.

From the cultural treasure chest of living history to the abundance of unique natural resources and recreational experiences, this region sits is a diamond among gems.

In conclusion, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is worthy of national designation. This may be one of the few remaining places in our great country with the integrity worthy of national acclaim. But the forces of change which diminish these qualities in other parts of Colorado and the Nation are quickly—are rapidly approaching here as well.

I urge you to act quickly to stem the flow of irreparable change and enact legislation establishing the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. Thank you, and I would entertain any questions that you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Velasquez follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANN MARIE VELASQUEZ, SANGRE DE CRISTO  
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am Ann Marie Velasquez and I am testifying in support of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area (SDCNHA). I am interim Chairman for the emerging Board of Directors of the proposed National Heritage Area, the management entity named in bill S. 2037. I am also the Executive Director for Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway, Secretary/Treasurer for the Conejos County Tourism Board and former Secretary/Treasurer of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Steering Committee. I hold advisory committee positions at the State level for several heritage tourism projects including the Colorado Tourism Office's Heritage Tourism Strategic Plan.

I'd like to thank you for asking me to testify at this hearing. The bill to designate the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is one of high importance to the three county region which lies within the great San Luis Valley of Colorado. This is evidenced by the number of people who have traveled with me to Washington just to be present for this hearing.

The San Luis Valley is located in the south-central region of the State of Colorado surrounded by the Sangre de Cristo Range and northern Culebra Range of the Rocky Mountains to the East and the San Juan Range, which forms the Continental Divide, to the West. At 122 miles long and 74 miles wide, the San Luis Valley is Colorado's largest mountain park and has been labeled "the highest, largest, mountain desert in North America". The proposed designation area is comprised of Costilla, Conejos and Alamosa counties in addition to the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, Baca National Wildlife Refuge and Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge; all lying within the southeastern part of the San Luis Valley.

With 11,000 years of documented human habitation, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is a crossroads of the centuries. Here a unique blend of Native American, Hispano and Anglo settlement is reflected in the diversity of the people, art and traditions. The geographic isolation of the alpine valley and the people's enduring tie to the land have given rise to a rich cultural heritage and ensured its preservation. The area's fertile cultural landscape is complemented by remarkable natural resources, including the mighty Rio Grande, majestic Rocky Mountain peaks, Great Sand Dunes National Park, National Wildlife Refuges, and the high mountain desert, all of which lend the Sangre de Cristo National Area an unparalleled beauty that offers a sense of retreat and a powerful source of inspiration for visitors.

For a century and a half the region has cultivated a rich heritage that is a living testament to the generations gone before us. Everyday life is endowed with traditions, both conscious and subconscious, that have been passed from father to son, mother to daughter and neighbor to neighbor. New neighbors learn traditional ways and over time, find themselves embracing these traditions either out of need or out of respect. This is a land that is essentially true to its roots.

The history of the proposed area is marked by the dynamic encounter of three major cultures during a time when the nation's boundaries and flags were in a state of constant change. First Nations, or Native Americans, Indo-Hispanos and Anglo-European vied for the land. They held divergent views of the land and its resources. The Utes, who claim 11,000 years of ancestry and occupation, like other First Nations had a unique and spiritual relationship with the land. They could never think in terms of owning it. That would have gone against all that they believed. The land was a friend, a provider, and a partner to all of nature. It fed and sheltered. It cared for the people and gave them everything they ever needed.

Hispanos claimed territory for the motherland and God. Theirs was a communal self-sustaining system, which required the cooperation of everyone. Villages were born with extended families, building adobe structures which were connected and surrounding a town square called a plaza. Farming and ranching depended on the acequia system of irrigation which functions well only when everyone is a participant. Land ownership was for the good of the family, the community and the Church.

When Anglo/Europeans began to populate the land, they brought with them a system of deeds, surveys, titles, taxation and barbed wire to delineate and define. Mining, building railroads and big ranching were the goals. For the Anglo/Europeans, the land was not so much perceived as a place of sustenance, but seen more as a source of resources to be used and extracted.

The U.S. military presence came in 1852 just one year after the first Hispano settlement in the region. Fort Massachusetts, built then, proved to be inadequate so the army replaced it with Fort Garland in 1858. Fort Garland remained as a fort for 25 years. Its mission was to protect settlers against hostile Indians. Hostilities were present among the three groups, but major battles never occurred.

The distinguishing elements that set this region apart from others are the multitude of natural resources and incredible recreational choices that integrate with the distinctive cultural landscape. Early settlers found precious water in abundance and fertile soil in which to raise crops and graze livestock. Vast forests provided wildlife for food, wood for lumber, plants for medicines and forage for livestock.

The designation area contains habitats and wildlife that are characteristic of the San Luis Valley, yet unique to Colorado and the West. A natural marvel, the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, lies to the north end of the designation area. The dunes, the tallest in North America, developed as a result of winds blowing across the valley.

Despite the title of "desert", the San Luis Valley boasts one of the West's most prized natural resources—WATER. Two separate aquifers underlie the valley and both contain large quantities of water. Water from mountain drainages and ground water moving toward the valley filtrates down and recharges the aquifer. The range of wetland types in the designation area, each with varying degrees of water permanence, supports a diversity of plant and animal species, some of which are very rare

such as the slender spiderflower. The SDCNHA provides a comprehensive sampling of the valley's intricate system of wetlands that is fed by watershed runoff, creeks, ditches, ground water and artesian wells.

The amount of federally protected land within the proposed National Heritage Area attests to the natural resources within the southern portion of the San Luis Valley. The State of Colorado and the Nature Conservancy also protect substantial land holdings in the proposed area. These protected lands include a National Park and Preserve, three National Wildlife Refuges, a National Forest, two National Wilderness Areas, a proposed National Natural Landmark (Rio Grande), Bureau of Land Management lands, 15 State Wildlife Areas, a State Park and the 97,000 acre Nature Conservancy Medano-Zapata Ranch.

Plant species, wildlife and birds are abundant throughout the SDCNHA. A number of plant communities and bird and animal species found in this area have been recognized by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program as globally significant. Rankings of these particular plants, birds and animals put them in the category of vulnerable to extinction. For this reason, protected lands serve as last bastions in preserving species.

Other wildlife in the area boasts large populations such as deer, elk, Rocky Mountain sheep, and pronghorn. More common forbearers such as beaver are found throughout the region.

Exceptional recreational opportunities abound in the Sangre de Cristo area. There are hundreds of square miles of public lands, thousands of acres of wildlife rich wetlands, marshes, and water bodies and two designated wildernesses that provide for highly diverse recreation experiences. While experiencing this unparalleled scenic beauty one can find solitude, absorb clean crisp air, gaze upon some of the clearest of night skies and bask in a climate that is dominated by sunlight.

Nature based tourism includes recreational pursuits such as dune skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, camping, biking, bird watching/wildlife viewing, cross-country skiing, hiking, mountaineering, star gazing, fishing and hunting. Both the Sangre de Cristo Wilderness and the San Juan, Wilderness areas provide excellent recreation opportunities for visitors seeking more remote backcountry hiking, camping, and mountain and ice climbing experiences.

The Rio Grande and the diversity of ecosystems and life zones and the intricate system of wetlands that span the area, make wildlife viewing phenomenal. The valley is situated on a major flyway and sees a large number of species as great waves of birds pass through on annual migration. With further enhanced partnerships and interpretive tourist information, several of these areas could be organized into wildlife driving tours. Bird watching guides and tours have the potential to increase visitor traffic tremendously throughout the area.

Cultural based tourism can be experienced through the architecture, development patterns, art, food, lodging and cultural events. Los Caminos Antiguos, the Ancient Roads, is a 129 mile stretch of Colorado highway that links many of the key resources in the proposed SDCNHA. The Byway provides visitors with panoramic views, a strong sense of the past and opportunities to experience the rich culture and traditions of the local people. Along this route one can see and feel the authenticity of the cultural landscape. Visitors can experience numerous historic Hispano communities such as San Luis, the oldest town in Colorado, listed as a National Historic District, with its plaza, vega, adobe structures, mission churches, local artifacts, authentic restaurants, cultural museum and B&Bs. On the same trip, visitors can see historic Mormon villages that illustrate the tightly gridded streets and clustered homes of the early settlers and pass through the numerous railroad towns that sprung up during the late 1800s. One of the larger railroad towns is Antonito where the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is located. This historic railroad has vintage steam-powered locomotives and wooden passenger cars that wind through spectacular scenery as it travels through the San Juan Mountains on route to Chama, New Mexico. Fort Garland, the once stronghold of protection for the settlers of the region, is now a fine museum offering interpretation of everyday life. Its one time commander, Kit Carson, and the regiment of buffalo soldiers who served at the fort are highlighted with interpretation, artifacts and special displays. Reenactment camps and living history events bring bygone times back to life. Many more recreation opportunities exist but are far too many for this testimony to list.

Isolation within these valley walls has been the impetus that has kept the culture intact and the natural resources from being completely exploited. An archaic dialect of 17th Century Spanish is still spoken by about 35% of the population, showing remnants of centuries past.

In this high mountain valley, isolation has worked to our advantage and to our disadvantage. Although our heritage and culture have been well preserved, the pop-

ulation has remained relatively low. The exodus of our youth to more prosperous areas has left its mark on the ability of families to keep generations-held land. Our financial resources and tax base has not kept pace with urban areas or even with other rural communities. The counties of Conejos and Costilla are two of the poorest in the country. The struggling economies of these counties, as well as their sister county, Alamosa, are in desperate need of economic enhancement. Unemployment averages within these counties is high and per capita income, when compared to the Colorado State average, is low at 45-65%. As we search for ways to sustain our agrarian lifestyle, a National Heritage Area designation would compliment existing efforts of attracting heritage travelers through tourism. Heritage tourism and historic preservation are proven economic stimulators and a perfect fit for rural communities. Along with tourism, heritage education to include the traditional arts, language and local history would benefit tremendously from the national designation.

I would like to include in this testimony the process of bringing this dream of National Heritage Area designation from beginning to present day and of the overwhelming support that exists for the designation.

Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway is one of the 24 Colorado scenic byways and traverses three of the southernmost counties of the San Luis Valley and is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization. During the research the Byway conducted while preparing interpretive material for publication, the board of directors realized that there was a significant, important, and integrated story within the region that had not been told, nor had it been celebrated. The Byway holds a stake in the cultural and historical preservation of the area. It's not unusual for a byway, either a State Scenic Byway or National Scenic Byway, to lie within a National Heritage Area.

A consensus of the Board of Directors instructed byway planners to include the formation of a National Heritage Area in the Strategic Plan for the Byway. Beginning with three public meetings, one in each of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla counties, the Byway assessed interest, attendance and the willingness of individuals to help move the project forward.

Attendance and interest from these meetings encouraged us to organize interested parties to work on the designation. A volunteer steering committee was nominated and formed. Today, several of the original steering committee members from 2002 are still actively involved and have traveled to Washington to be present at this hearing. The steering committee has been responsible for the majority of the work that has been done thus far on the Heritage Area designation effort and in the creation of the feasibility study.

From those first meetings, we've met regularly over the past five and a half years to plan, organize and take forward the concept. We've held several other public meetings and have encouraged individuals to become involved either on the committee or in other ways. Individuals from our committee have presented at various monthly and quarterly meetings of other non-profits, special interest groups, civic groups, local governments and tourism boards. We have met with the County Commissioners of all three counties periodically to update them on the progress of the designation process. Countless hours have been spent in research and building public support for the project.

Resolutions supporting the National Heritage Area designation from all three Boards of County Commissioners have been received, as well as supportive resolutions from communities lying within the proposed region. Numerous letters of support have been obtained from local and regional governments, businesses, non-profit organizations, regional economic development entities and individuals. Our State Senator, Lewis Entz, and our State Representative, Rafael Gallegos have also shown their support for the project throughout our efforts and have given letters committing their support.

Financially, Los Caminos Antiguos has supported the efforts, and through their non-profit status, individuals have been able to make cash contributions. The greatest contributions that have impacted our goal of designation have been the overwhelming personal work of our professional volunteers. As I mentioned, countless hours of research have been contributed. That research had its roots in a collaborative scholarly symposium that our steering committee presented in November of 2002. Partnerships with Adams State College, Trinidad State Junior College, Adams State College Title V Office, Jalisco Inc. (a private business) and Los Caminos Antiguos were formed to present the full day, multi-venue symposium on the history, heritage, culture and natural resources that make up the proposed region. Over 31 presenters donated their time, travel costs and research to the National Heritage Area effort. Scholarly papers were presented at the symposium and then given to the steering committee to be used in the authoring of the feasibility study. Cultural groups donated performances during the lunch that was provided with

funding from our partners. People from the San Luis Valley and other regions of Colorado and the state of New Mexico came to hear the presentations that were made in lectures and on panels.

The feasibility study was researched and authored almost entirely by local historians, authors, scholars, business people and residents of the proposed region. This once again shows the overwhelming support for this designation from a multitude of people within the valley and around the state of Colorado. A well known landscape architecture firm Shapins Associates, specializing in heritage planning and research, contributed significantly to the completion and production of the final study.

Within the planning process, partnerships with our local public land agencies and organizations have been a main focus. Our partners include the Rio Grande National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the three National Wildlife Refuges within the NHA boundaries. All of these agencies have been contributors to the research and writing of the feasibility study. A close working relationship has been established with the nation's newest National Park, the Great Sand Dunes. State agencies such as the Division of Wildlife and Colorado State Parks have all offered technical assistance along the way.

Since the completion of the feasibility study, the group has sought to further Heritage Tourism by participating with other organizations to advance visitor readiness and increase the profile of the region. Preservation projects to protect some historic treasures include placing the original circa 1880s Antonito Train Depot on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Restoration work on the depot is being planned with a new coalition of partners and an interpretive center is under consideration.

The recognition of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area's three county region as an important component in America's history is long overdue. From the cultural treasure chest of living history to the abundance of unique natural resources and recreational experiences, this region sits as a diamond among gems.

In conclusion, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is worthy of national designation and has met the criteria of the National Park Service. This may be one of the few remaining places in our great country with the integrity worthy of national acclaim, but the forces of change which diminished these qualities in other parts of Colorado and the nation are rapidly approaching here as well. I urge you to act quickly to stem the flow of irreparable change and enact legislation establishing the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you very much.  
Ms. Wyatt.

**STATEMENT OF CATE MAGENNIS WYATT, PRESIDENT, THE  
JOURNEY THROUGH HALLOWED GROUND PARTNERSHIP**

Ms. WYATT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator and with great appreciation to Senator Allen for his support of this very important legislation and his wonderful opening remarks. My name is Cate Megennis Wyatt, and I am president of The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership, which is an initiative that began in 1996 and has worked over the last 10 years closely with the National Park Service, building a very strong coalition of now over 150 partners.

This region from Gettysburg, as so eloquently described by Senator Allen, following the old Carolina Road, down to Monticello, hold more American history than any other swath of land in the country. It has been described by renowned Yale University historian, Stephen Woodward, as—and I quote, “This part of the country has soaked up more blood, sweat and tears of American history than any other part of the country. It has bred more founding fathers, it has inspired more hopes and ideals, and witnessed more triumphs, failures, victories, and lost causes than any other place in the country.”

The history of the heritage sites is long, it is included in the written testimony, and it includes over a million acres of land already on the National Register of Historical Places. Fourteen National Historical Landmarks, eight presidential homes, but much, much more important than the bricks and the mortar, are the men and the women, who contributed through individual acts of leadership and combined acts of courage to create these United States.

In June 1755, on the onset of the French and Indian War, Major General Edward Braddock led troops across this region of Virginia to attack a French Fort in what is now Cumberland, Maryland. Had those battles gone differently and had not those young soldiers gave their lives, we might very well be speaking French at the moment.

Twenty years later a collection of British citizens by the names of Jefferson, Madison and Monroe, risked their lives and their livelihoods to wage war against their own sovereign nation, and now in retrospect, we recognize audaciously sought to create a grand dream called democracy.

In 1859, it was John Brown who led his men across the very same region as he planned and executed his attack on Harper's Ferry in the name of Freedom for All.

And a mere 80 years after the revolution, this very land absorbed more loss of blood, dreams and lives, with more Civil War battles were fought on it than any other region in the country. More lives were lost on this land than in the history of the country as young men laid everything they had on the line. And brave women like Clara Barton, administered as best they could. Among others who risked everything were the slaves who ran in hopes of finding freedom and the Quaker towns and abolitionists who honored and harbored them while they were on their way.

I could go on and on, and if this sounds like a history lesson, it is, and it's a lesson we want to bring to every American and every visitor. We ask that you support this legislation as we intend to bring alive the history of our Nation, so that we may honor those who made it their home; others their grave, and by each deliberate contribution contributed towards creating these United States.

We would offer that on the merits of history alone the national heritage area designation is appropriate, but on the merits of the strength of the partnership, it is equally on solid footing. This is an amazingly strong grassroots operation, as Senator Allen indicated, with over 150 partners. These partners have allowed us to raise over \$1.7 million in private funds, which are already sustaining and supporting this initiative as well as the cost of the feasibility study, which we understand is of a different model perhaps than the National Park Service would prefer. We are thrilled with the partnership we have with the National Park Service the efforts that have already been undertaken in this cooperative effort to ensure that our feasibility study, indeed, is as good as it possibly can be.

We have already hired our consultant to begin this work and have had two meetings and will be moving immediately following this testimony to our third meeting with the Park Service so we will ensure that we will make every effort to meet the criteria set

by the Park Service to ensure that this legislation meets their standards.

We also recognize as important as our heritage is so, too, is the constitutionally-protected private property rights, and S. 2645 is among the most stringent when it comes to protecting citizens' private property. We believe the Virginia hallowed ground is most qualified and worthy of national heritage area designation.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity to testify, and we certainly welcome any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wyatt follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CATE MAGENNIS WYATT, PRESIDENT, THE JOURNEY THROUGH HALLOWED GROUND PARTNERSHIP

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Akaka, and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Cate Magennis Wyatt. I am the President of The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership and I appreciate the invitation to present testimony on behalf of Senate Bill 2645, the "Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area Act of 2006." I have served in government, as the Secretary of Commerce and Trade for the Commonwealth of Virginia, in the private sector as a developer and in the non-profit sector as a trustee on numerous Boards.

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership is a 10 year old grassroots organization with over 150 Partners, which has worked with the National Park Service over this period to raise national awareness of, interpretive educational programs for, and civic engagement in, the unparalleled history within the region that generally follows the Old Carolina Road (Rt. 15/231) from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania through Frederick, Maryland, ending at Monticello in Albemarle County in Virginia. This area includes land in ten counties and four states.<sup>1</sup>

I. SENATE BILL 2645

Senate Bill 2645 would establish the area within the proposed boundary as the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area (hereinafter, "Heritage Area"). This region has been described by renowned Yale University historian C. Vann Woodward as follows:

"This part of the country has soaked up more of the blood, sweat, and tears of American history than any other part of the country. It has bred more founding fathers, inspired more soaring hopes and ideals and witnessed more triumphs, failures, victories, and lost causes than any other place in the country."

And, by author and noted Revolutionary War authority Richard Ketchum, as:

"If any land in America deserves to be called Hallowed Ground, it is this red clay soil on which so much of this nation's past is preserved."

Inhabited hundreds of years ago by the Iroquois and Susquehanna Native Americans, this region was traveled by European trappers and frontiersmen who ventured to the wilderness to find a means to create a living. Young surveyor George Washington laid the plans for the town of Culpeper, never envisioning that it would later be engulfed by the largest Calvary battle of the Civil War, the battle of Brandy Station.

In June 1755, the onset of the French and Indian War, Major General Edward Braddock led troops from Virginia across this region to attack the French fort in what is now Cumberland, Maryland. Had those battles gone differently, had not the young soldiers gave of their lives, we very well might be speaking French.

Twenty years later, a collection of British citizens, by the names of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, risked their lives and their livelihoods to wage a war against their own sovereign nation and, in retrospect, audaciously sought to create a grand dream called democracy. As we read through their journals and have the benefit of their thoughts, they did not always agree on how to create this country, nor on what

<sup>1</sup> Attachment A (retained in subcommittee files) is a map of the Heritage Area. This area includes: Adams County (PA); Frederick County (MD); Jefferson County (WV); Loudoun County (VA); Prince William County (VA); Fauquier County (VA); Culpeper County (VA); Orange County (VA); Madison County (VA); Louisa County (VA); Charlottesville/Albemarle County (VA) and Fluvanna County (VA).

this notion, “Democracy”, should look like in law. As they traveled between their homes and to Philadelphia, the natural resources along the Journey served to inspire them. Jefferson wrote in his journal, as he observed the confluence of the Potomac, that it invites you “as it were, from the riot and tumult roaring around, to pass through the breach and participate in the calm below” (Thomas Jefferson, Notes of the State of Virginia).

During the Revolutionary War, this corridor served as headquarters to Generals Wayne, Lafayette, and Muhlenberg, each of whom exhibited bravery and leadership in the face of daunting odds. In 1859, John Brown led his men through the region as he planned and executed his attack on Harper’s Ferry in the name of freedom for all.

A mere 80 years after the Revolution, this very land absorbed the loss of blood, dreams and lives with more Civil War battles waged on it than any other region in the country. There were more lives lost on this land than in the history of this country as young men laid everything they had on the line and brave women like Clara Barton administered as best they could. Among others who risked everything, were the slaves who ran in the hopes of finding freedom and the Quaker towns and abolitionist who harbored them along their way.

During the War of 1812, as Washington was burning, Dolly Madison sent a fearless team to secretly steal away the documents of democracy to private homes in this region for safe keeping.

This is the land that gave respite to Presidents Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, Kennedy and Eisenhower and where General George Marshall found solace in the only home he ever owned, as he said, “after 41 years of wandering”—a home where he could pen The Marshall Plan, which exported the ideals of Democracy to Europe. A listing of the great variety of historic resources within the proposed Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area is attached to this testimony.<sup>2</sup>

It was through these hills and along this corridor that they all led by example and left their indelible mark on the creation of America. Some made it their home, others their grave, and by each deliberate contribution, they created these United States.

In his Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863, Lincoln spoke to the nation when he said:

“We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that (this) nation might live.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract.”

Senators, the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership is here today to ensure that not only do we not detract, but that we work diligently to extract the lessons in leadership and celebrate the landscape that has inspired generations to fight for the evocative ideals of democracy.

National designation for the Heritage Area, as further explained below, will bring numerous benefits to the region and help ensure that our children and grandchildren are able to walk in the footprints of those who gave their lives to give us this nation.

#### *B. The Role of the Partnership as Management Entity within the Heritage Area*

S. 2645 designates the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership, an organization based in Waterford, Virginia, as the management entity for the Heritage Area and outlines the Partnership’s duties and authorities in Section 5 of the bill. The Partnership is bi-partisan, public-private initiative that works collaboratively with heritage sites, elected officials, business leaders, educators, landowners, preservationists, and destination marketing organizations to celebrate the cultural heritage in this region.

Considerable thought was given to the creation of this Partnership. First, an Advisory Council was created which includes: the Presidents of Monticello, the Civil War Preservation Trust, the Eisenhower Institute, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Protect Historic America, among others. Early counsel was sought from the National Heritage Area Program Director and the President of the Alliance of National Heritage Areas.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Attachment B (retained in subcommittee files) is an inventory of historic resources within the proposed Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area.

<sup>3</sup>Attachment C (retained in subcommittee files) lists the Advisory Council members for the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership.

Next, a Board of Trustees was convened and includes professionals in the fields of heritage conservation, interpretation, tourism, and representatives from the business sector. This Board takes seriously its responsibilities. It has raised significant private funds to execute its 2005-2007 management plan with time-specific performance schedules and cost benefit analysis for funds expended.<sup>4</sup>

Section 5(b) of the bill authorizes the development of a Heritage Area management plan by the Partnership and authorizes the use of federal funds to develop and implement that plan within the Heritage Area. It is with assurance that I commend to you the current management entity which has demonstrated fiscal responsibility and best management practices. The Partnership is well-equipped to serve as the managing entity for the Heritage Area and to oversee the implementation of the management plan. The Partnership has been working with the National Park Service for nearly ten years to advance the Heritage Area concept for this region, as demonstrated by the National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary which was placed online by the National Park Service in 2000.<sup>5</sup>

Over the past ten years, the Partnership has worked diligently to build a strong network of local, regional and national partners to develop a common vision for the conservation and enhancement of the scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, and natural characteristics of the region. Over 100 community briefings have been given, in addition to twenty full-day or two-day workshops held within the four (4) states each of which convened stakeholders from the community. A list of numerous Community Workshops and Partners meetings held to date is attached to this testimony.<sup>6</sup> In addition, a list of the Partners and affiliated supporters of the Heritage Area effort is attached to this testimony.<sup>7</sup>

The Partnership has developed a committee structure with the establishment of the several standing committees, including Economic Development and Education Subcommittees. As a result, the Partnership has created a highly successful education outreach program to reach students and teachers within the region as well as across the nation, and is creating a heritage tourism program that will provide economic development opportunities, through regional branding and cooperative marketing, in communities throughout the Heritage Area. Finally, the Partnership has been working with local, state and national officials to create a National Scenic Byway to supplement the Heritage Area designation that will help sustain and strengthen the economy, heritage and quality of life in the region. Heritage area designation will ensure that the Partnership and its collective members can continue their active work as the official management entity for the Heritage Area.

#### *C. Specific Benefits of Heritage Area Designation for the Region*

The Partnership and its members are seeking designation of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground as a national heritage area because it will provide operational funding and National Park Service support for the Partnership and its members to work collaboratively with business leaders, heritage sites, elected officials, preservationists, destination marketing organizations, citizens, and a variety of community-based organizations to create interpretation programs and to promote the history and tourism opportunities within the Heritage Area. To date, all operational funds for The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership have been provided through private philanthropic donations, which will continue as the initiative moves forward.

Importantly, the region will also benefit from national recognition due to the association it confers with the National Park Service through the use of the NPS arrowhead symbol as a branding strategy, a symbol so familiar to most travelers. Local economies benefit by the increased heritage tourism, and the Heritage Area has the support of 15 Main Street Communities and historic downtowns in four states.

Although tourism is the first, second or third largest industry in each region within The Journey Through Hallowed Ground, the Partnership's research found that visitation to heritage sites has been dramatically declining over the past five years. Further research identified perhaps the root cause of this decline—the heritage tourist demographic profile is that of a highly educated, two-income earning family with little time to plan itineraries. Accordingly, the Partnership has designed and launched the *Where America Happened*<sup>TM</sup> marketing campaign.

Each element of this campaign makes it easy for citizens and visitors alike to plan multi-faceted trips along heritage themes or geographic destination. These efforts

<sup>4</sup> Attachment C lists the Board of Trustees for the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership.

<sup>5</sup> See [www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/journey](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/journey).

<sup>6</sup> See Attachment D (retained in subcommittee files) is a list of Community Workshops and Partners meetings held to date.

<sup>7</sup> See Attachment E (retained in subcommittee files).

have included: publishing a *Journey Through Hallowed Ground* guidebook, designing a website which educates and facilitates heritage visitation, the creation of visitor maps and brochures, working to create a National Trust for Historic Preservation Study Tour and the development of audio touring CDs. In addition, the Partnership has implemented a targeted, concentrated media outreach plan which has resulted in over 100 local and national articles including features in *Smithsonian*, *National Geographic* and *Preservation* magazines as well as PBS television and National Public Radio stories. A sample of these articles is attached to this testimony.<sup>8</sup>

Allow me to emphasize, however, one very important distinction between marketing the region and the intended results. Clearly, by design, our marketing efforts provide economic benefits to, and support for, our heritage sites, national parks, Main Street Communities and working landscape industry. However, our directive and intended result, as we launched and pursue our *Where America Happened*<sup>TM</sup> campaign, is to bring civic education alive for children and adults alike. This Partnership feels that The Journey Through Hallowed Ground is a trip every American must take in their lifetime.

Accordingly, we also seek to work with the National Park Service to create interpretive programs on leadership. Such programs will allow visitors to walk in the footsteps of those who created this nation and fought to ensure democracy prevailed. Only by visiting can one begin to comprehend the enormity of the contributions made by normal citizens and statesmen alike. Only by experiencing this Journey can we hope to instill the invaluable lessons of individual acts of leadership under peril which combined to create the values of America—values and lessons which must be shared with generations to come. By combining historic preservation and civic education with sound environmental stewardship, the Partnership aims to help inspire every citizen and visitor alike.

Finally, Heritage Area designation also has more intangible benefits, such as functioning as a federal “seal of approval” that acknowledges the depth of historic assets and importance of a region to our American cultural heritage on a national scale. It is an honor for a region to achieve this congressionally-designated status and propels citizens and communities to greater appreciation and understanding, and spurs voluntary conservation practices. Increased pride of a community and region in its history and traditions increases residents’ interest and involvement in retaining and interpreting the landscape for future generations. Preserving the integrity of the cultural landscape and local stories means that future generations will be able to understand their relationship to the land and have a sense of “place” although they may not be from the area originally. In sum, designation would provide increased opportunity for collaboration, marketing, resource protection, education, interpretation, recreation, heritage celebration, civic involvement and quality of life.

#### *D. Community Support*

Community support for the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Heritage Area reaches back to 1992 to the origins of the Partnership, when national and local organizations joined together with local citizens to raise awareness of the importance of the history of the region in response to a proposal to build a theme park in the area. Support for the Partnership has come from ordinary citizens and landowners, local businesses, heritage sites, educators, government agencies, and elected bodies such as town councils, counties, historians and other academics, regional planning districts state general assembly, and nonprofit conservation and preservation organizations.

For example, over the past several years, in preparation of seeking the National Heritage Area designation, the Partnership has sought to formalize this support through obtaining official resolutions in favor of the National Heritage Area designation and the efforts of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground from fifty-eight (58) elected bodies.<sup>9</sup> In each case, these resolutions were considered after public presentations and thoughtful debate. S. 2645 would further this community involvement by allowing all federal, state and local groups to participate actively in the development and implementation of the management plan and allow sites within the area to benefit from grants to be administered by the National Park Service and offered through the Partnership.

In addition, many residents, business interests and nonprofit organizations within the proposed area have been involved in the planning for the Heritage Area and have demonstrated their support through letters of support. For example, thirty

<sup>8</sup>Attachment F (retained in subcommittee files) includes copies of major print press coverage of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground.

<sup>9</sup>Attachment G (retained in subcommittee files) to this Testimony includes copies of the resolutions of support passed by local governmental bodies within the proposed Heritage Area.

preservation, conservation and recreation organizations, fourteen heritage sites, nine government agencies, thirty-four businesses, twenty educators and education institutions, and over two hundred and fifty private citizens have written in support of the Heritage Area. The Heritage Area effort has also generated a high level of public interest, having been written about it over ninety newspaper articles, fifteen of which were on the front page, and including editorials of support from Vermont to Fredericksburg, Virginia.<sup>10</sup> The Heritage Area also has a high level of voter support, as indicated in a voter survey taken in 2005 regarding the Journey Through Hallowed Ground initiative.<sup>11</sup>

As stated, the Partnership already has a very strong foundation of community support and commitment through the involvement and support of more than 150 public and private, foundation, community, and citizen partners already actively involved in heritage activities in the region. Designation would ensure that this level of collaboration and support is increased and sustained.

## II. PRIVATE PROPERTY PROTECTIONS

Celebrating American heritage is important, and so are constitutionally-protected private property rights. Sections 9 and 10 of S. 2645 are devoted to private property protection assurances. Section 9 requires that owners of private property be notified in writing if the property will be included in the management plan and provide written consent. Section 9 also allows a property owner to withdraw from being included within the boundary of the Heritage Area by submitting a written request.

Section 10 provides that nothing in the bill would require any property owner to provide governmental or public access to their property, or modifies any federal, state or local law dealing with public access or use of private property or any land use regulation. In addition, Section 10 provides that nothing in the bill creates any liability of any property owners with respect to persons injured on such property. Section 10 provides, further, that nothing in the bill requires a private property owner located within the boundaries of the Heritage Area to participate or be associated with the Heritage Area.

In Section 5(a), the bill authorizes the Partnership to acquire land through gift, devise or by purchase *from a willing seller*, and also provides assurance that “no lands or interests in lands may be acquired by condemnation.” In Section 5(e), the legislation states that the Partnership “may not use Federal funds received under this Act to acquire real property or interest in real property.” In sum, S. 2645 contains some of the most stringent private property rights protections of any heritage bill yet passed by Congress. Even private property advocates have acknowledged that the bill’s language is not objectionable from a private property protection standpoint.

Furthermore, a General Accounting Office (GAO) report from 2004 determined that there is no evidence that heritage areas impact private property rights, after extensive interviews with private property rights groups.<sup>12</sup> Zoning and land use policies remain local decisions made by locally elected officials who are directly accountable to citizens they represent. There are no federal mandates in this bill. Heritage areas are “non-federally owned, managed by local people with many partners and NPS advice, funded from many sources, and intended to promote local economic development as well as protect natural and cultural heritage resources and values.”<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See Attachment F (retained in subcommittee files).

<sup>11</sup> See Attachment G (retained in subcommittee files).

<sup>12</sup> See GAO Report 04-593T, “National Park Service: A More Systematic Process for Establishing National Heritage Areas and Actions to Improve Their Accountability Are Needed” (March 30, 2004) (Methodology section) (“To determine the extent to which, if at all, private property rights have been affected by these areas, we discussed this issue with the national coordinator, regional officials, the Executive Director of the Alliance of National Heritage Areas . . . the executive directors of the 23 heritage areas that were established at the time of our work, and representatives of several private property rights advocacy groups and individuals, including the American Land Rights Association, the American Policy Center, the Center for Private Conservation, the Heritage Foundation, the National Wilderness Institute, and the Private Property Foundation of America. In each of these discussions, we asked the individuals if they were aware of any cases in which a heritage area had positively or negatively affected an individual’s property rights or restricted its use. None of these individuals were able to provide such an example.”)

<sup>13</sup> Carol Hardy Vincent and David Whiteman, Congressional Research Service, Resources, Sciences and Industry Division, “Heritage Areas: Background, Proposals, and Current Issues” (updated March 9, 2006), at pg. 3.

## III. CONCLUSION

Heritage areas are founded on the concept that the best way to preserve important historic and cultural landscapes is through voluntary partnerships and community participation, allowing property to remain in state, local or private ownership but unifying the area through shared efforts at promotion, preservation, and interpretation. It is essential for Congress to continue to recognize the desire of citizens and communities to obtain national recognition for areas with national importance, allowing citizens to promote and further a sense of pride of place on a national and international scale.

We understand that National Park Service seeks enactment of program legislation as contained in S. 243 passed by the Senate last year that would establish statutory guidelines and a more uniform process for designation of national heritage areas. We also understand that the increasing demand on National Park Service resources should dictate that only those sites that are most qualified should be designated by Congress as a heritage area. We strongly believe that the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area meets the criterion for designation set forth in S. 243, and is an example of a site most worthy of national heritage area designation. We look forward to continuing our close collaboration with National Park Service to provide all the necessary assurances that the Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area Act of 2006 is consistent with their desire for supporting only the most highly qualified heritage area programs.

Once again, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to address the Subcommittee on this important legislation. I look forward to answering any questions you or your colleagues may have.

\* \* \*

“This is the ground of our Founding Fathers. These are landscapes that speak volumes—small towns, churches, fields, mountains, creeks and rivers with names such as Bull Run and Rappahannock. They are the real thing, and what shame we will bring on ourselves if we destroy them.”<sup>14</sup>

—David McCullough, a Pulitzer Prize winner and one of the narrators for the PBS “Civil War” series

Senator THOMAS. Thank you very much.  
Mr. Rice.

**STATEMENT OF DANIEL M. RICE, PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
OHIO & ERIE CANALWAY COALITION, AKRON, OH**

Mr. RICE. Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the committee; my name is Dan Rice. I’m president and chief executive officer of the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, a regional non-profit organization working on the Ohio River canalway in northeastern Ohio.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to appear before the committee today to offer testimony in support of S. 1721. I am here also today to testify as a general witness on behalf of the eight other national heritage areas included within S. 1721.

While I will be providing some limited information about the work of some of the national heritage areas, I respectfully request the subcommittee keep the record open so that those national heritage areas can submit testimony themselves. The Ohio & Erie Canalway is a national treasure, that sovereign can meet national, historical and recreation resources along the Ohio-Erie canal of northeast Ohio.

Working in partnership with our private, local, State, and national partners, we are developing a 101 mile multi-use rec-

<sup>14</sup>As stated in a Press Conference regarding the Journey Through Hallowed Ground at the National Press Club on May 11, 1994.

reational trail conserving hundreds of acres of natural areas, cultivating new stewards with over 160,000 hours on area projects, preserving historic structures and stimulating over \$270 million of community and economic development.

For every one dollar federally-received funding, Mr. Chairman, we are leveraging over \$12.00 of private, local and State investment. All of these accomplishments would not even be possible if it were not for the legislation and designation as a national heritage area.

With the development of our management plan, we have obtained the investment, commitment and support of all our partners, including the National Park Service, for this 20-year plan.

For the first 3 years of our designation, we completed our resource inventories and developed a management plan. From 2000 and 2006, we established the identity for the canalway and worked on the three main linkages of the Topia Trail, scenic highway and scenic river.

Through the hard work and dedication of our over 90 plus partners, I am proud to tell you, Mr. Chairman, that we are ahead of schedule and poised to move into the second phase of the development of the Ohio River canalway.

As you can see, Mr. Chairman, we are at very critical crossroads in the development of our project as well as the eight other national heritage areas. If our Federal partners withdraw from the partnership and their commitment to the management plans, the private, State and local partners may take the same approach and withdraw their commitment and support. Once this occurs, the public/private partnership is dissolved, the foundation for the regional resource conservation strategy is destroyed, and the previous investment of private, local and state and other partners may be at risk.

Reauthorization of the Ohio & Erie River Canalway and the eight other national heritage areas allows us to complete our management plans, fulfill our commitments to the local communities and develop the necessary funding diversification and self-sustaining strategies.

In essence, Mr. Chairman, reauthorization enables the national heritage areas identified in S. 1721 to move towards sustainability, and a decreased dependence on the National Park Service for long term funding.

Although the Ohio & Erie Canalway is not scheduled to address the issue of funding diversification and sustainability until 2012, this year, the net of 2006 we have already begun the view of our processes and our partners and all our funding at the local level.

It is our intention, over the next 3 years to develop a funding diversification sustainability strategy so that we can be prepared in 2012 to implement that policy.

As you see, these are results of effective planning. As you know, Mr. Chairman, we support very strongly your general area heritage program administration bill, S. 243.

However, with a grandfather clause to include the existing national heritage areas, we support the account of doing a study 3 years to the sustaining of funding. But unfortunately we do not have the luxury of that time right now.

And so we would ask, respectfully, that we be able to make an adjustment in the pending legislation.

To be quite honest with you, I'm disappointed in the National Park Service testimony that was just received here. It truly sends a mixed message. The reference to the National Park Service Advisory Committee report regarding having a framework and structure for national heritage areas, at the same time, that very report, Mr. Chairman, says that there was a need to include national heritage areas within the system of the National Park Service, as well as a long term commitment to national heritage areas, and we feel that does send a mixed message.

As I move to my conclusion, Mr. Chairman, now more than ever, we need to maintain our partnership with the National Park Service and renew our shared commitment to the nine national heritage areas listed in S. 1721.

I believe that national heritage areas are an innovative approach to resource conservation and truly represent the future of the National Park Service of the 21st century. Most importantly, national heritage areas expand the reach of the National Park Service and allows the service to effect the lives of ordinary citizens in extraordinary ways, without the burden and responsibility of long term maintenance and ownership. Working together, Mr. Chairman, we have the opportunity to create legacies for future generations. I want to thank you very much for this opportunity. I look forward to answering any questions you may have, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rice follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANIEL M. RICE, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, OHIO & ERIE CANALWAY COALITION, AKRON, OH

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee, my name is Daniel M. Rice. I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, a regional private non-profit organization working on the development of the Ohio & Erie National Heritage Canalway from Cleveland to New Philadelphia, Ohio in northeast Ohio. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before the Committee today to offer testimony in support of S. 1721, a bill to amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 to extend the reauthorization for certain National Heritage Areas.

I am here today also to testify as a general witness on behalf of the eight other National Heritage Areas included within S. 1721. These National Heritage Areas, the class of 1996, were all authorized together in the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996. These National Heritage Areas have charted new territory in the way the federal government works to conserve America's great heritage. These nine National Heritage Areas have proven that the National Park Service conservation strategy can be a partnership that involves state, local and private partners with each party's investment hinged to support the others. These nine National Heritage Areas have been reviewed by the Government Accountability Office and have successfully demonstrated that National Heritage Areas promote the National Park Service ethic of resource conservation, and cultivate stewardship for our national resources without impacting private property rights. While I will be providing some limited information about the work of some of the National Heritage Areas, I respectfully request that the Subcommittee keep the record open so that those National Heritage Areas can submit testimony themselves.

Within S. 1721 are eight other National Heritage Areas, including Augusta Canal National Heritage Area (Georgia), Coal National Heritage Area (West Virginia), Essex National Heritage Area (Massachusetts), Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area (New York), Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area (Pennsylvania), Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area (Iowa), South Carolina National Heritage Corridor (South Carolina), and Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area (Tennessee). Over the past ten years, I have had the privilege and benefit of working with each of these Heritage Areas and experienced the unique heritage and resources of the eight other National Heritage Areas. Collectively, these nine National

Heritage Areas are successfully promoting resource conservation, celebrating cultural traditions and stimulating community and economic development.

The Ohio & Erie Canalway is a regional and national treasure that celebrates the unique natural, historical and recreational resources along the Ohio & Erie Canal from Cleveland to New Philadelphia in northeast Ohio. Working in partnership with our private, local, state and national partners, we are developing a 101-mile multi-use recreational trail, conserving hundreds of acres of natural areas, preserving historic structures and stimulating over \$270,000,000 of community and economic development activity. For every \$1 of federal seed funding, we are leveraging over \$12 of private, local, and state investment.

As one of the 27 Congressionally-designated National Heritage Areas, the Ohio & Erie Canalway is a successful example of the national heritage area concept of the conservation and interpretation of nationally significant resources through local management and investment. Some examples of our resource conservation accomplishments include:

- Development of 73 miles of the multi-use recreational Towpath Trail from Cleveland to New Philadelphia, Ohio. To date, over \$53,000,000 of private, local, state and federal resources have been invested in this regional greenway. Over 3 million users utilized the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail in 2005.
- Implementation of four county trail and green space plans with over 400 miles of connecting trails and 1,000 acres of green space.
- The relocation of the world headquarters of Advanced Elastomers Systems from St. Louis, Missouri to Akron, Ohio, along the banks of the Ohio & Erie Canal. Local developer Paul Tell invested \$25 million dollars in the former BFGoodrich building and generated over 300 new jobs in downtown Akron.
- Over 160,000 volunteer hours on National Heritage Area related programs and projects, and over 250,000 participants in educational programs.
- Preservation and restoration of historic canal resources including, the Mustill House and Store, Henniger House, Zoar Hotel, Zoar Town Hall, Jackson Township School and the Richard Howe House.
- Local developer Frank Sinito invested over \$13 million dollars in the mixed-use development, Thornburg Station, along the banks of the Ohio & Erie Canal and Towpath Trail in Independence, Ohio in Cuyahoga County. Through a combination of upscale restaurants, offices and shops, Thornburg Station has generated over 50 jobs and is a destination Trailhead along the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail.
- Designation of the Canalway Ohio Scenic Byway as a State and National Scenic Byway.
- Extending the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad from the Cuyahoga Valley National Park to the City of Akron and the City of Canton.
- Creation of a Communications Plan, including a comprehensive Interpretation Plan, Signage Plan and Marketing Plan. In April 2006, we introduced the first Visitors Guide for the Ohio & Erie Canalway, in partnership with our Convention & Visitors Bureaus.
- Provided technical assistance and planning support for the four main Canalway Center Visitors facilities. The first of our facilities, the Stark County Canalway Learning Center is scheduled to open in 2007.

Through the development of public/private partnerships, we are exporting the National Park Service ethic of resource conservation to thousands of citizens, cultivating stewardship and investment of the unique resources and most importantly, creating a legacy for future generations.

All of these accomplishments would not have been possible without the designation, as a National Heritage Area, by Congress in 1996.

The National Heritage Area designation provides an organized regional structure and forum for the promotion of resource conservation, interpretation and development of the natural, historical and recreational resources along the Ohio & Erie Canalway. With the development of the Corridor Management Plan, we obtained the investment, commitment and support of all of our private, local, state and federal partners for the Ohio & Erie Canalway. All of our private, local, state and federal partners, including the National Park Service, endorsed the Corridor Management Plan and committed their resources to the completion of the 20-year plan.

For the first three years of our designation, we completed our resource inventories and developed the Corridor Management Plan. From 2000 to 2006, we established the identity for the Ohio & Erie Canalway and worked on the three main regional linkages of the Towpath Trail, Scenic Byway and the Scenic Railroad. Through the hard work and dedication of our over 90-plus partners, I am proud to tell you that

we are ahead of schedule and are poised to move into the second phase of the development of the Ohio & Erie Canalway.

According to the Corridor Management Plan, approved by the Secretary of the Interior, over the next six years, we will work on the following items:

- Complete the key regional linkages, including the Towpath Trail, Scenic Byway and Scenic Railroad.
- Expand the connecting trail network.
- Market the entire Ohio & Erie Canalway and its journeys.
- Assist the Canalway Center project partners to complete construction.
- Continue coordination with the National Park Service for program involvement.
- Develop Corridor-wide programs and mechanisms for their continued operations.

As you can see, Mr. Chairman, we are at a very critical crossroads in the development of the Ohio & Erie National Heritage Canalway, as well as the other eight National Heritage Areas and that is why we are requesting reauthorization of these nationally significant projects. Just as much of the past accomplishments of the nine National Heritage Areas have been due to the participation and involvement of the National Park Service, much of our future success depends on the continued partnership and participation of the National Park Service. As the Corridor Management Plan for the Ohio & Erie Canalway states, "Alliances and regional coalitions are critical to the long-term success of the National Heritage Corridor as well as to the accomplishment of short-term projects."

Over the past ten years, the other eight Heritage Areas have experienced similar success in the promotion of resource conservation and development.

From FY 1997 through FY 2006, the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area in western Pennsylvania has received \$8,645,000 in National Park Service funding through this authorization. This funding, which Rivers of Steel is required to match, has raised more than \$45,000,000 through the National Heritage Area to match the National Park Service funding, with an additional \$35,000,000 being leveraged with the partner organizations or local governments in the seven county National Heritage Area. This investment has resulted in more than 200 heritage development projects that are either ongoing or have been completed in the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area.

Since 1996, the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor has successfully completed over 100 large-scale projects, and is currently working on over 40 more, while also providing programming and major marketing efforts. The South Carolina National Heritage Corridor serves as a catalyst and an incubator for heritage tourism development across the state of South Carolina. The efforts within the Heritage Area led to the development of numerous statewide initiatives, including the South Carolina Farmer's Association and the South Carolina Artisans Consortium; and placed an emphasis on protecting and celebrating the diversity of cultures in South Carolina such as the influence of Native Americans, African and Caribbean heritage.

The Augusta Canal National Heritage Area in Georgia preserves promotes and celebrates the region's rich history, heritage, culture and natural resources relating to the Augusta Canal for the benefit of current and future generations. Since designation in 1996, some of the major projects completed include, construction of a nine-mile multi-use trail along the Augusta Canal, construction of an award-winning Interpretive Center in an abandoned textile mill, and renovation of the 1875 gatehouse, locks, four historic buildings and the canal head gates.

I know without reauthorization of the Ohio & Erie Canalway, we will be unable to fulfill the commitments and obligations outlined in the Corridor Management Plan, and it could undermine the successful public/private partnership strategy at the local level. I trust that without reauthorization, the other eight Heritage Areas contained within S. 1721, will not be able to fulfill their Management Plans and responsibilities.

If our federal partners abandon the partnership and their commitment to the Management Plans, the private, local and state partners may take the same approach and withdraw their commitment and support. Once this occurs, the public/private partnership is dissolved, the foundation for the regional resource conservation strategy is destroyed and the previous investment of private, local, state and other partners will be at risk. Continued federal investment is necessary to maintain the momentum and provide critical seed funding to important components of the Management Plans.

All of the National Heritage Areas included in S. 1721 were established with 10-year Management Plans to guide the work of the National Heritage Areas for the next 10 years. This was not meant to be a limitation on the life of the National Her-

itage Area, only a limitation on the timeframe of the plan. At the end, or near the conclusion of the Management Plan, the National Heritage Areas were charged with the responsibility to chart out its next 10-year strategy. National Heritage Areas were established as long-term conservation tools to protect America's heritage in places where sole federal government ownership, i.e., units of the National Park Service were not feasible or practicable. National Heritage Areas need to be reauthorized in order to fulfill their Management Plans. Selecting a pre-determined termination, as it has been suggested after 10 years, will cause more harm than good.

Reauthorization of the Ohio & Erie Canalway, and the other eight National Heritage Areas, allows us to complete our Management Plans, fulfill our commitments to the communities and develop the necessary funding diversification and self-sustaining strategies. In essence, reauthorization enables the National Heritage Areas identified in S. 1721 to move towards sustainability and a decreased dependence on the National Park Service for long-term funding.

From 2012 to 2020, the Corridor Management Plan for the Ohio & Erie Canalway recommends the development of funding diversification and self-sustaining strategies to maintain the quality of the experience of the Ohio & Erie Canalway. Although we are not scheduled to address this issue until 2012, in 2006, we began an internal review of our operations and initiated conversations with our local foundations, corporations, governments and state agencies regarding funding diversification and self-sustaining strategies and models. Building upon the recently completed studies of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and the Delaware and Lehigh Canal National Heritage Area, it is our goal to begin the implementation of our funding diversification strategy within the next six years. With the continued participation of the National Park Service, we will develop a comprehensive funding diversification and self-sustaining strategy that protects the investment of private, local, state and federal resources, continues the promotion of resource conservation, while stimulating community and economic development in the region.

Mr. Chairman, now, more than ever, we need to maintain our partnership with the National Park Service and renew our shared commitment to the Ohio & Erie National Heritage Canalway, and the eight National Heritage Areas listed in S. 1721. National Heritage Areas successfully promote and export the National Park Service ethic of resource conservation without significant permanent investment. Through the National Heritage Area designation, we are building permanent community partnerships and developing funding diversification and sustainability strategies for the conservation of nationally significant resources. Most importantly, National Heritage Areas expand the reach of the National Park Service and allows the Service to affect the lives of ordinary citizens, in urban areas and townships, across this country in extraordinary ways, without the burden and responsibility of ownership and long-term maintenance by the National Park Service.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I believe that National Heritage Areas are an innovative approach to resource conservation and they represent the future direction of the National Park Service in the 21st century. That is why I strongly urge your support for the passage of S. 1721 so we can continue our successful partnership for resource conservation and the celebration of our nationally significant resources. Working together, we are creating legacies for future generations.

I would like to express my thanks to you, Senator Thomas, for your outstanding leadership and vision regarding National Heritage Areas. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding S. 1721 before your Committee, and I am happy to answer any questions that you, or other members of the Committee might have.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you very much.

Ms. Cutler.

**STATEMENT OF CHARLENE PERKINS CUTLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CEO, QUINEBAUG-SHETUCKET HERITAGE CORRIDOR, INC.**

Ms. CUTLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to offer testimony on the amendment of the Quinebaug-Shetucket River Valley National Heritage Corridor Act of 1994.

I am the executive director and CEO of Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Area, Incorporated, which is a nonprofit, designated management entity for the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor.

I ask that our document "The Trail to 2015, a Sustainability Plan" can be entered in its entirety into the record of the subcommittee.\* To summarize that document, I am pleased to say that the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Incorporated has been very successful in its work to date in fulfilling the intent of Public Law 103-449, the responsibility given to us by the Congress, and the visions and goals of our management plan. It is our intent to be self-sustaining and not need Federal funding by the year 2015.

Our heritage corridor has been diligent, has completed a management plan, an implementation and action plan, an interpretative plan, a 10 year plan that extended the vision of the management goals, and now a sustainability plan. And those documents have been truly useful.

We have shown a consistent ability to maximize scarce resources by developing and fostering partnerships with State and Federal municipal governments and regional corporate and private entities as well as our residents.

We've acted as an educator and facilitator to motivate other organizations to take independent actions in line with our mission.

The Quinebaug-Shetucket Corridor is one of the most appropriate entities, we have taken action through specific projects and programs to do critical work.

Our heritage corridor has received numerous State and national awards recognizing the excellence of our work including the 2005 Public Education Award from the American Association for our Green Valley Institute.

We have consistently met and exceeded the requirements from the Federal appropriation. The communicative ratio is \$19 to every Federal dollar, and I have a pie charts attached to the back of my written testimonies so you can see that where it divides up by type.

Direct grants to 191 local projects have funded work in trail development, historic preservation, economic development, heritage tourism infrastructure, natural resource conservation and community planning. The sustainability plan offers many examples of those projects.

Hundreds of volunteers have given more than 10,000 hours of service last year alone to our projects and programs. And 7,045 participants have benefitted from our fiscal year 2005 education programs.

According to our fiscal year 2005 audit, 89% of the heritage corridors expenditures regardless of source go directly into programming.

Our communities and residents increasingly look to our heritage corridor as a source for educational assistance and an advocate for resource conservation. We have developed credibility at local, regional, state and Federal levels and we need to continue the work to fulfill the mission to be present for several decades. That is why we adopted the sustainability plan this January and why we are committed to achieving its goals.

There are two key elements to realize those goals. We must maintain credible programming and we must have the faith in our work that the Federal investment demonstrates to attract signifi-

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\*The document has been retained subcommittee files.

cant, long-term non-Federal resources. Therefore, we respectively request that the Quinebaug-Shetucket Area National Heritage Corridor Act of 1994 be amended to extend the period of authorization from 2009 to 2015 and to extend the total appropriation from \$10 million to \$16 million to coincide with our time table for being self-sustaining.

We would also request that we retain designation as a national heritage corridor after authorization has ceased since our region will be known as significant national resources. I thank Senators Dodd, Kerry, Kennedy and Lieberman for their support of our work in this amendment, and I am pleased to answer any questions the subcommittee may have. This concludes my prepared testimony.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Cutler follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHARLENE PERKINS CUTLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO, QUINEBAUG-SHETUCKET HERITAGE CORRIDOR, INC.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on S. 574, to amend the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor Act of 1994. I am the executive director and CEO of Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc., the grassroots nonprofit designated as management entity for the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor.

I ask that our document, *The Trail to 2015, a Sustainability Plan*, be entered in its entirety into the record of this subcommittee.\*

To summarize that document, I am pleased to say that Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor Inc. has been very successful in its work to date in fulfilling the intent of Public Law 103-449, the responsibility given to us by the Congress, and the visions and goals of our Management Plan. It is our intent to be self-sustaining and not need federal funding by the year 2015.

- Our Heritage Corridor has been diligent and has completed a Management Plan, an Implementation and Action Plan, an Interpretive Plan, a Ten-Year Plan that extended the vision of the original management goals, and now a Sustainability Plan. Those guiding documents were completed in a timely and efficient manner, and have been truly useful documents.
- We have shown a consistent ability to maximize scarce resources by developing and fostering partnerships with federal, state and municipal governments, and regional corporate and private entities. We have acted as an educator and facilitator to motivate other organizations to take independent actions in line with our mission. When the Heritage Corridor was the only or most appropriate entity, we have taken action through specific projects or programs to do critical work.
- Our Heritage Corridor has received numerous state and national awards recognizing the excellence of our work, including the 2005 Public Education Award from the American Planning Association for our Green Valley Institute.
- We have consistently met and exceeded the required match on our federal appropriation. The third page of my written testimony includes an analysis of our funding and non-federal leverage since 1994. The cumulative ratio is \$19 to each federal dollar.
- Direct grants to 191 local projects have funded work in trail development, historic preservation, economic development, heritage tourism infrastructure, natural resource conservation and community planning. The Sustainability Plan offers many examples of these projects.
- Hundreds of volunteers have given more than ten thousand hours of service last year to our mission-related projects and programs, and 7,045 participants have benefited from our FY05 education programs.
- According to our FY05 audit, 89% of the Heritage Corridor's expenditures, regardless of source, go directly into programming.

Our communities and residents increasingly look to our Heritage Corridor as a source for guidance and assistance, and as an advocate for resource conservation. We have developed credibility at the local, regional, state and federal levels. The need to continue the work to fulfill the mission will be present for several decades.

\*The document has been retained in subcommittee files.

That is why we adopted the Sustainability Plan this January and why we are committed to achieving its goals.

There are two key elements to meeting those goals:

- In order to maintain credible programming that will attract significant, long-term, non-federal resources, it is critical to retain the federal investment over the next ten years.
- Reauthorization to 2015 would leverage significant, multiyear, non-federal commitments that are essential to our self-sustainability.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor Reauthorization Act of 1994 be amended to extend the period of authorization from 2009 to 2015, and to extend the total appropriation from \$10 million to \$16 million, to coincide with our timetable to be self-sustaining by the year 2015. I thank Senators Dodd, Kennedy, Kerry and Lieberman for their support of our work and this amendment.

I am pleased to answer any questions the Subcommittee may have. This concludes my prepared testimony.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you very much. Thanks to all of you for being here. It's a great job and I know that it takes a great deal of work on the local level to do these things, and it's very much that way. I have just one or two quick questions, and if you can give us a quick answer, then we'll be able to wind up here pretty soon.

Mr. Sullivan, when do you expect the Blackstone River Heritage Area to be self-sustaining?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that we would be able to maintain the 22-1 ratio, and I would say by June 6 we could have come close to meeting that challenge.

Senator THOMAS. I see. Okay. Good. Mr. Rice, your heritage area does not lose its authorization until 2012. Why are you seeking to go to 2027 with 6 years remaining?

Mr. RICE. Mr. Chairman, there's actually two caps in our legislation there's a funding cap of up to only a million dollars for a total cap of \$10 million, and then there's the amount of years, I believe 15 years. We are coming up against our refunding cap. That's why we're seeking reauthorization at this time so we can continue to fulfill the obligations and responsibilities outlined in our management plan.

Senator THOMAS. I see. Okay.

Ms. Cutler, yours will be self-sustaining then by 2015, is that your plan?

Ms. CUTLER. Correct.

Senator THOMAS. Did you intend to be self-sustaining as you organized your plan in the first place?

Ms. CUTLER. The first 5 years of our appropriation was about \$300,000 a year in an area of 1,100 square miles. That didn't make a lot of impact so it was only within the past 5 years that we've been able to make some significant headway and realized what our capabilities would be. And so it's been our intention over the past couple of years to develop this plan because we feel that if we can't sustain that work over the long term. This is off-and-on, though.

Senator THOMAS. Okay, well, I appreciate it. I want you to understand, I'm not trying to make a huge issue out of this funding thing, but I do think that heritage areas are pretty much oriented to regions and to local areas and they're very helpful to the local people, although they do retain side things as well.

You know, we have 390 park systems now and we have a funding problem on that, as you well know, you've read a lot about it, and so we have to try to figure out the best way overall to handle this financial situation and so on. We certainly want to continue to see these things happen and find the best way to do that.

Ms. Wyatt, section 5 of the bill as I understand it, authorizes the use of Federal funds for land acquisition and section 5(e), states that Federal funds may not be used for acquisition of real estate. I don't understand that.

Ms. WYATT. Typo.

Senator THOMAS. Typo? Gotcha.

Ms. WYATT. That was just a typo, we have no intentions of using the funds under this Federal Act for the purchase of real property.

Senator THOMAS. I see.

Ms. WYATT. Other funds from other donations could be used by the non-profit.

Senator THOMAS. Sure. I understand.

Ms. WYATT. But we will certainly make that change.

Senator THOMAS. Yeah, okay. Well, again, let me say how important I think it is to continue to do these things. Because, you know, the park generally, why the whole park is a ball park and it's all public land, and it's maintained and so on, where here you have private lands within your operations, and Federal and local lands, and all this other, they are different, but they're very important. And it's very important of you to be able to work at the local level to create these kinds of things. They are great. I was just in Virginia a couple of weeks ago, and all the things that happened in Jamestown and Yorktown and also all the park facilities that are already there. But it's great, you know, it's historic and we're very proud of Yellowstone and Cavetown and so on in Wyoming, so I'm glad we're working together to do these things and we just got a buzz to go vote, I noticed and thank you very much for being here. We'll certainly work with the committee in trying to get maybe some of the changes that the Department would like to have and then see if we can get you in and do other things. So thank you very much. If there are any questions from other members, why, I will ask you to answer them by mail.

Thank you.

Senator THOMAS. The committee's is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:42 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

## APPENDIXES

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### APPENDIX I

#### Responses to Additional Questions

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##### RESPONSES OF CATE MAGENNIS WYATT TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR THOMAS

*Question 1.* (S. 2645, Journey Through Hallowed Ground NHA Designation): Have any private property owners objected to this designation as a National Heritage Area?

Answer. No individual property owners have approached the Partnership with concerns or objections about how they feel the proposed bill might affect their land specifically. However, representatives of a few organizations representing private property rights viewpoints and opposed to the national heritage area concept, generally, have contacted the Partnership to voice opposition.

Where the Partnership has been able to engage in dialogue with these groups, and language has been proposed by them to improve the bill and strengthen private property rights protections, we have readily agreed and immediately incorporated suggested language—for example the language in Section 5(a)(2)(D) clearly stating that “no lands or interests in lands may be acquired by condemnation.” Other entities have been unwilling to engage in dialogue, and have limited themselves resort to public protest tactics, making it hard to discern from them improvements to the bill that would address concerns.

We can tell you, however, that hundreds of private property owners resident in the area have voiced resounding support for the National Heritage Area and strongly desire a more coordinated regional approach to honoring the national importance of the history of the region for residents and visitors.

*Question 2.* (S. 2645, Journey Through Hallowed Ground NHA Designation): Section 5(a) of the bill authorizes the use of Federal funds for land acquisition and Section 5(e) states that Federal funds may not be used for acquisition of real property or interest in real property.

a. Do you intend to use Federal funds to acquire any land for the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Heritage Area?

b. Should we amend the bill to correct the conflicting statements about use of Federal funds for real property/land acquisition?

Answer. One of the intended purposes of Section 5(a) was to recognize that the management entity, as a Virginia corporation like any other corporation, has the authority generally to accept funds from a variety of sources to assist with operational and other costs. However, it was also the intent of the legislation, as stated in Section 5(e), to clearly prohibit the Partnership from using federal funds provided under the Act to acquire real property or any interest in real property. We agree that the language in Section 5(a)(2)(D) conflicts with that in Section 5(e) and thus the Partnership would support an amendment to strike Section 5(a)(2)(D) and retain Section 5(e) in its entirety.

*Question 3.* (S. 2645, Journey Through Hallowed Ground NHA Designation): What do you see as the best use of Federal funds that are made available to National Heritage Areas?

Answer. The Partnership believes that the federal funds made available to National Heritage Areas are best utilized to develop and implement heritage area management plans that represent the very finest that can be achieved by public-private collaboration and coordination toward the united goal of moving ahead as a society while respecting our past.

The Partnership understands the economics of prospering through preservation and is working currently on creating strategic alliances with the private sector and

with educational foundations to sustain the critical work of educational programming, to create profit centers in publishing, study tours, and audio touring tapes, among other initiatives that will enhance such collaboration.

The federal funding that the Partnership is provided as the management entity will further these types of efforts, and allow the Partnership to fulfill its goal of setting an example of the kind of exciting and inspiring things that can happen when government, business, and citizenry work together at celebrating, commemorating, conserving and promoting the history and resources in an area in a cost-effective manner that leverages funding from a variety of sources.

*Question 4.* (S. 2645, Journey Through Hallowed Ground NHA Designation): What do you see as the Federal government's role in National Heritage Areas?

Answer. Only the federal government, and specifically only an Act of Congress, can provide the national "seal of approval" for an area as a designated National Heritage Area. This national designation is honorific. It honors regions which not only hold significant heritage, but confers this designation because the citizens, businesses, elected bodies and non-profit organizations within the region have taken decided steps to ensure this heritage will be available to generations to come. In this respect, for over 10 years, the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership has worked not only to increase awareness, but has worked collaboratively with stakeholders to significantly celebrate, commemorate, conserve and promote our heritage.

As the Partnership has seen many times "if you Honor people—they become Honorably." Specifically, we have witnessed, and have research to support, the tangible and intangible benefits which result from federal honorific designations. The recognition serves to bolster a sense of pride and place. It provides a catalyst to voluntary community and individual efforts to celebrate, commemorate, conserve, promote and protect resources integral to our American heritage.

In short, the federal role is recognition of the importance of an area to the Nation's story. Also, importantly, the designation permits the increased partnership of the management entity with the professionals within National Park Service who lend their decades of expertise to these regions as they work closely and collaboratively to promote historic, cultural, recreational and other resources for visitors and residents. National Park Service involvement helps ensure the ultimate success of the heritage area effort.

*Question 5.* (S. 2645, Journey Through Hallowed Ground NHA Designation): Is your heritage area prepared to become self-sustaining and not require Federal funds like Ms. Cutler has outlined for her heritage area in Connecticut? If so, by what date do you expect to be self-sustaining?

Answer. The JTHG Partnership has been self-sustaining for over ten (10) years, with the significant support of the private sector, and has created a business plan to ensure it has been self-sustaining each of those ten years. This private sector support will only increase with the passage of this legislation, with the federal support authorized under the legislation being utilized to broaden the activities of the Partnership to serve as a management entity in the manner outlined in the legislation. We have every expectation of being fully self-sustaining as a management entity for the heritage area within the 15 year authorization period for funding set forth in the legislation.

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RESPONSES OF ANN MARIE VELASQUEZ TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR THOMAS

*Question 1.* (S. 2037, Sangre de Cristo NHA Designation): Approximately how many people reside within the boundaries of the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Area?

Answer. According to the 2003 Population Estimate from the San Luis Valley statistical profile, 27,731 people reside within the boundaries of the proposed National Heritage Area. U.S. Census Bureau actual figures for the year 2000 were stated as 27,029. This area encompasses all of the counties of Conejos, Costilla and Alamosa.

*Question 2.* (S. 2037, Sangre de Cristo NHA Designation): Have any residents objected to the designation as a National Heritage Area?

Answer. We have not encountered anyone objecting to this designation. We have held public meetings to inform residents of the efforts and what the designation could mean for the area. After speaking with several people in other currently designated National Heritage Areas, and with the National Park Service personnel at the beginning of this process, we learned that most objections in the west were concerned with private property rights. We have addressed this issue whenever possible and specifically asked to have a clause concerning private property rights included in the bill. We understand that this clause has become a standard clause that is now incorporated into a bill to designate a National Heritage Area.

*Question 3.* (S. 2037, Sangre de Cristo NHA Designation): If your area is approved as a National Heritage Area, how long do you think it will take for you to be self-sustaining without a need for Federal funding?

Answer. During the planning process for the feasibility study we reviewed other currently designated National Heritage Areas. Many areas are able to leverage the federal funding received through the U.S. Congress by up to 22 to 1. This figure is even surpassed in some areas. With this type of leveraging, self-sustainability should be attainable within the authorized period. We intend to create a business plan along with the Management Plan that is required within the first 3 years of authorization. This should help to focus on projects that will lay a solid foundation for sustainability and study how the SDCNHA can operate without federal assistance. Business enterprises that directly relate to our Not for Profit status could be one avenue of longevity, as an example. One of our partners is Adams State College, a local higher education facility. We intend to work with the School of Business to pursue a plan for sustainability. The ingenuity that it took to produce the feasibility study with \$5,000.00, called "superior" by NPS Deputy Director Donald Murphy, exists in this region of the country. We view these federal funds as a stimulus, not a crutch. We are confident that self sustainability is within reach during the original authorization period of 10 to 15 years.

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RESPONSES OF CHARLENE CUTLER TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR THOMAS

*Question 1.* (S. 574, Quinebaug and Shetucket NHA Reauthorization): Ms. Cutler, you stated that your heritage area will be self-sustaining without any need for Federal funds in 2015. Have you always intended to become self-sustaining or is this a new approach to doing business?

Answer. Senator Thomas, early on our Heritage Corridor anticipated becoming self-sufficient, and our planning documents bear that out. We were one of the earlier NHAs designated and received a smaller appropriation for the first five years (\$200,000/year). In a region of nearly 1,100 square miles, it is understandable that under that level of funding our impacts were small. In the past five years we have accomplished significant work with the increased federal investment and been able to coalesce many partners and, most importantly, residents around our joint mission.

In 2000, we wrote Vision 2010: A Ten-Year Plan, that expanded on the vision of our original management plan. The overall goal of that plan was "to accomplish the mission of our National Heritage Corridor by perceiving and reflecting the priorities of residents and translating these into programs and services for the next ten years and beyond." That plan also foresaw the need to think past federal funding and stated that if the overall goal was to carry the work forward, an endowment or some other type of permanent fund would need to be established to generate income for the work.

In preparation for that eventuality, our organization conducted a Fundraising Feasibility Study in 2002. That study recognized that there was no example of a National Heritage Corridor developing a permanent fund, and therefore, we were in uncharted waters. The document also recognized the rural nature of our region. It laid out a conservative and realistic plan to developing sustaining resources. Extrapolating out to our \$10 million goal, we plan to have the fund capitalized in 2015.

Our experience has also shown us that there is a required critical mass of successful programming that must be attained in order to attract significant, non-federal resources. We feel that we have reached that threshold and will be able to begin a capital campaign to develop a permanent fund. However, in our National Heritage Corridor, that is very rural and has a relatively low population, we also know that we need the time to 2015 to be successful in accumulating the funds.

In 2004, we began working on Trail to 2015, A Sustainability Plan. The permanent fund is one leg of our three-legged stool plan; the other two are for-profit activities and foundation support.

With private funds, we have just hired a well-respected and very successful development professional to shepherd the organization through the next ten years to the point of self-sustainability. The only element left to be in place is continued authorization through 2015 to maintain credible programming until other resources take over. We are committed to becoming self-sustaining and this is not a new idea for us.

*Question 2.* (S. 574, Quinebaug and Shetucket NHA Reauthorization): Do you think all National Heritage Areas should become self-sustaining and free of Federal funding at some point?

Answer. Every NHA is distinctive, although they all have commonality in resource protection, resource interpretation and economic development. If each NHA is truly grassroots in origin, that is, its focus is driven internally as opposed to externally, then there must be some point at which the stewards take complete ownership for the fulfillment of the mission. I think self-sustainability is inevitable if the work is to be carried forward to the next group of stewards—our children and grandchildren.

*Question 3.* (S. 574, Quinebaug and Shetucket NHA Reauthorization): What do you see as the Federal government's role in National Heritage Areas?

Answer. I think the Federal government best serves National Heritage Areas by first recognizing regions of significant national resources, designating them as such, and providing seed money for the work the residents of that area determines is important. National Heritage Areas are impressive in their ability to put responsive programming in place very quickly. That ability is what attracts non-federal match to the process.

Many layers of federal requirements would seriously impede that process and put a damper on the ability of a NHA to become self-sustaining. For example, if instead of appropriations funding was allocated as grants for particular projects, the accomplishments of heritage areas would be significantly less, and the time to put essential programs on the ground would become so slow that the programs would lose credibility with residents.

*Question 4.* (S. 574, Quinebaug and Shetucket NHA Reauthorization): What do you see as the best use of Federal funds that are made available to National Heritage Areas?

Answer. The best use of Federal funds is to support necessary planning documents and invest in programming until a critical mass is reached that measures impacts, identifies work no other entity can do, and points the way to self-sustainability.

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RESPONSES OF DAN RICE TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR THOMAS

*Question 1.* (S. 1721, Omnibus Heritage Area Extensions): Has the National Heritage Area that you manage had any adverse impact on private property within the boundaries of the heritage area?

Answer. No. The Ohio & Erie National Heritage Canalway has not had any adverse impact on private property within the boundaries of the Heritage Area.

*Question 2.* (S. 1721, Omnibus Heritage Area Extensions): Mr. Rice, the House has added private property rights language to every National Heritage Area bill they have passed. Do you have any objection to the language the House is using? If so, what are your specific objections and how would you amend the language if given an opportunity to do so?

Answer. Yes, I object to the private property rights language being inserted into the National Heritage Area legislation by the House Resources Committee. It is particularly confusing since the General Accounting Office investigated the relationship between private property rights and National Heritage Areas, and they were not able to document any examples or evidence of National Heritage Areas having an adverse impact on private property within the boundaries of Heritage Areas. The General Accounting Office report conclusively stated that National Heritage Areas do not have an adverse impact on private property rights.

For over 45 years, the citizens of northeast Ohio have worked in a collaborative manner to conserve, interpret and develop the natural, historical and recreational resources along the Ohio & Erie Canal, without a single issue of adverse impact on private property rights. The proposed language is unnecessary since we do not, and cannot preserve, conserve or promote private property without the consent of the private property owner. The success of our project is dependent on the cooperation and participation of our partners. Any other approach is unacceptable and inconsistent with our mission.

Based on our 45-year history and experience, I would suggest that the proposed private property rights language is not necessary and does not need to be included in our Reauthorization Bill, S. 1721.

*Question 3.* (S. 1721, Omnibus Heritage Area Extensions): S. 1721 reauthorizes 9 National Heritage Areas including the one that you manage.

a. Your heritage area, the Ohio and Erie Canalway, does not lose its authorization for Federal funding until 2012. Why are you seeking reauthorization to 2027 if you have another 6 years remaining?

Answer. In our original authorizing legislation, the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996, there were two clauses established for planning purposes:

“The Secretary may not make any grant or provide any assistance under this title after September 30, 2012.”

“There is authorized to be appropriated under this title not more than \$1,000,000 for any fiscal year. Not more than a total of \$10,000,000 may be appropriated for the corridor under this title.”

Since our authorization in 1996, we have received approximately \$8,500,000 of federal funds towards our \$10,000,000 authorization. At our present rate of federal appropriations, we will reach our funding authorization before 2012 and before we fulfill the responsibilities outlined in our Management Plan.

By seeking reauthorization now, we will maintain the momentum of leveraging over \$12 of private, local and state resources for every \$1 of federal investment, complete the responsibilities and projects outlined in the Management Plan and fulfill our commitment to the local communities.

*Question 3b.* Is your heritage area prepared to become self-sustaining and not require Federal funds like Ms. Cutler has outlined for her heritage area in Connecticut? If so, by what date do you expect to be self-sustaining?

Answer. According to our Management Plan, approved by the Secretary of the Interior, there are three phases to our plan, 2000-2006: Establishing the Identity, 2006-2011: Develop key Linkages and Resources and 2012-2020: Funding Diversification and Self-sustaining strategies. As I mentioned in my testimony, we are ahead of our schedule and we are already examining what we need to accomplish by 2020 and what partnerships, collaborations and resources we need to meet our objectives outlined in the Management Plan. Currently, we are developing a 3-year funding diversification and cultivation strategy for implementation in 2008, with the expectation that by 2012, we will be on target according to our Management Plan.

During the development of the funding diversification and cultivation strategy, we will examine the role of all of our public/private partners, including our federal, state, local and private partners, to determine if there is a continued need for continued participation, as outlined in Senator Thomas's National Heritage Area program legislation (S. 243). As part of the family of the National Park Service, there is a level of expectation and service that visitors to Heritage Areas have, due to the association with the National Park Service. When folks see the National Park Service logo attached to National Heritage Area materials, programs and projects, there is an immediate recognition that this is one of America's special places and that visitors will have a quality experience. One of the ways to ensure quality and service of the programs and projects of National Heritage Areas is to maintain the partnership with the National Park Service.

*Question 4.* (S. 1721, Omnibus Heritage Area Extensions): Should National Heritage Areas be made units of the national park system?

Yes. Despite being in direct conflict with Senator Thomas's National Heritage Area program legislation, S. 243, as well as the National Park Service Advisory Committee Report on Heritage Areas, I believe it is time to re-examine this issue. Even though the National Park Service Advisory Committee Report on Heritage Areas states, “the National Park Service must commit to Heritage Areas for the long term and welcome Heritage Areas into the system of the National Park Service,” the recent testimony by the National Park Service on our Reauthorization bill, S. 1721 contradicts that statement. It is apparent from their testimony that the National Park Service is not committed to National Heritage Areas, nor have they welcomed National Heritage Areas into the system of the National Park Service.

I have reached the conclusion that the only way for the National Park Service to fully accept, embrace and understand National Heritage Areas, may be to make them units of the National Park System. Our situation is similar to the National Long Distance Trails, National Seashores and National Recreation Areas, who received similar treatment before becoming part of the National Park System. Rather than being treated as the “red-headed step child,” National Heritage Areas can be recognized for their contributions to resource conservation, stewardship cultivation and recreational opportunities. Additionally, some of the successes of National Heritage Areas, including public-private partnerships and leveraging significant amounts of private, local and state funding, can be applied to units of the National Park Service. Congress has thoroughly examined the benefits and successes of National Heritage Areas and their entrepreneurial ways of conserving nationally significant resources. As the National Park Service looks to fulfill its mission in the 21st century, they can utilize the National Heritage Areas principles of leveraging private, local and state resources, cultivating public-private partnerships and devel-

oping entrepreneurial business practices to make the current system of National Park Service units more efficient and cost-effective. Finally, as units of the National Park Service, National Heritage Areas will demonstrate the significant costs savings of National Heritage Areas, compared to traditional National Park Service units. Rather than the traditional funding of between \$5,000,000 and 8,000,000 annually to each unit of the National Park Service, National Heritage Areas fulfill the mission of the Service at a fraction of the cost.

Based on these reasons, I believe it may be time to re-examine the issue of including National Heritage Areas as units of the National Park Service.

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RESPONSES OF GOVERNOR DONALD CARCIERI TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR THOMAS

*Question 1.* (S. 1387, Blackstone River NHA Reauthorization): How many acres of state, Federal, and private land are there within the boundaries of the Blackstone River National Heritage Area?

Answer. There are 400,000 acres of land within the boundaries of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. Of this total, approximately 26,000 acres are state-owned and 1,365 acres are Federally-owned. The rest is primarily in private ownership.

*Question 2.* (S. 1387, Blackstone River NHA Reauthorization): Have any private land owners within the boundaries of the Blackstone River National Heritage Area objected to being included in the area?

Answer. The Corridor Commission is not aware of any private land owners who have objected to being included in the area. On the contrary, several towns have expressed an interest in being included within the Corridor's boundaries, based upon local citizen initiatives. The Corridor has no authority to own or control land. Rather, it works in partnership. The Corridor Commission developed a policy early on to avoid taking positions on land use disputes at the local level, acting instead as a mediator or "convenor" on issues related to the Corridor's mission of resource protection. The Corridor has hosted public meetings on many occasions, inviting all factions and all levels of involvement, including Federal, state, and local governments, business entities, organizations, and local citizens. The purpose of these meetings has been to provide a neutral space for all parties to state their case, rather than to decide the outcome of a particular issue. This policy helped cement the Commission's reputation for promoting "the big picture" and a true spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

*Question 3.* (S. 1387, Blackstone River NHA Reauthorization): National Heritage Areas are established to form collaborative partnerships for identifying and managing areas with unique natural, cultural, and recreational resources. How much of the budget for the Blackstone River National Heritage Area is derived from Federal, state, and non-government sources?

Answer. The BLAC operating budget (\$800,000 in FY 2006 before recissions) is matched by the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island at least one-to-one. This requirement helps assure that each state is engaged in activities consistent with the ten-year work plan for the Corridor submitted to Congress. BLAC also has also received development funds in varying amounts throughout its 18 year term. BLAC has documented leveraging of 22 to 1 on those funds. A detailed breakdown of Federal appropriations and the leverage these funds have created in the Corridor was included in the Blackstone Sustainability Study, "Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future", which was published early this year, and is excerpted below:

THE COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CORRIDOR'S MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

It is also important to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the management structure. At the Commission's request, the NPS serves as staff and coordinates and implements the management plan, working primarily through partnerships to protect the valley's nationally important resources. The original assumption of the designation was that the heritage corridor management framework would be a less costly alternative to a traditional national park designation. While it may be difficult to compare the operations of a national heritage corridor and national park, it nonetheless demonstrates different funding scenarios and provides insights to the added value the NPS achieves through partnership management strategies.

Below, we compare two national parks with the Blackstone National Heritage Corridor in terms of annual operating budget and staffing. The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park is a linear canalway traversing several states, and Lowell National Historical Park is an urban partnership park focused on industrial heritage.

*Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park* follows the route of the Potomac River for 184 miles from Washington, D.C., to Cumberland, Maryland, and encompasses 20,000 acres. The park manages a complex historic and natural resources program with an annual operating budget of \$8.4 million and 122 full-time employees.

*Lowell National Historical Park* encompasses 141 acres within the City of Lowell, Massachusetts, and is responsible for preserving and interpreting numerous historic and cultural resources and celebrating the beginnings of America’s industrial heritage. Lowell has an annual operating budget of \$8.5 million and 112 full-time employees.

*Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor* encompasses an entire watershed of 400,000 acres and includes 24 cities and towns. It has a very broad mandate for the preservation, redevelopment, and interpretation of the cultural landscape. Blackstone has a current annual operating budget of approximately \$1 million and 14 full-time employees.

*Historic Preservation:* The Commission has invested approximately \$3,560,000 with an estimated return on this investment that exceeds \$132,705,000. These projects include such activities as historic preservation of national register eligible properties, cultural landscape assessments, collection management and curation of historic objects, archaeological studies, and community preservation plans.

*Interpretation, Education and Tourism Development:* The Commission has invested approximately \$9,966,000 in historical research, interpretive and cultural programs, and educational programs, with an estimated return on this investment that exceeds \$17,700,000. These projects include such activities as NPS-ranger guided tours and lectures, visitor center and museum development, exhibit design and fabrication, interpretive master plans for heritage sites and communities, curriculum development, support for cultural arts education and programming, development of interpretive brochures and websites, tourism marketing and promotion, a unified identity system, and public information program.

*Community Planning and Economic Development:* The Commission has invested approximately \$4,667,000 to assist communities in developing strategies and plans that help to support Corridor heritage preservation and development goals. It is difficult to put a definitive dollar value on much of the leverage to this investment. An estimated \$292,371,000 in leverage contributed toward community revitalization projects, regional visions, transportation improvements, master planning for historic mill villages, land preservation, regional economic development plans, revitalization of historic industrial properties, and the redevelopment of historic mills.

*River Recovery and Recreation:* The Commission has invested approximately \$4,684,000, which has leveraged \$79,121,000. These activities include developing parks, constructing the Blackstone River Bikeway, developing river landings and public access sites for boating and fishing, constructing trails, developing plans for the restoration of migratory fish, wetland and streambank restoration projects, upgrades to wastewater treatment plants, watershed-wide education programs, and water quality monitoring and protection programs.

Commission leverage	Commission investment	Partnership leverage
Historic Preservation .....	\$3,559,810	\$132,704,834
Interpretation, Education and Tourism .....	\$9,965,629	\$17,713,372
Community Planning and Economic Development .....	\$4,666,497	\$292,370,886
River Recovery and Recreation .....	\$44,684,340	\$79,120,938

Development funds are the most effective way we engage with our partners. More recently, BLAC has been able to require greater levels of collaboration and matching funds from our partners. For example; the Northern Gateway Visitor Center in Worcester, MA—a project which will anchor the northern end of the Corridor—was developed as a result of a feasibility and engineering study partially funded by the Corridor Commission. That contribution, along with funding set aside for exhibit development, consists of about \$700,000 in funding from the Corridor. This contribution leveraged a commitment of \$6.4 million in federal transportation funds, \$1.6 million in state matching funds, and \$2 million from the City of Worcester. In addition, the Visitor Center’s prime tenant and operating entity, the Worcester Historical Museum, expects to raise between \$5 million and \$7 million to develop a world-class museum facility in the Visitor Center. It is unlikely that this complex project would have succeeded without the upfront “seed” money provided by the Corridor Commission.

*Question 4.* (S. 1387, Blackstone River NHA Reauthorization): Dr. Sullivan, we have just heard the director of a heritage area in Connecticut state that she plans to be self-sustaining and free of Federal funding by the year 2015. When do you expect the Blackstone River National Heritage Area to be a self-sustaining entity with no requirement for Federal funds?

Answer. The question of becoming self-sustaining is one that post-dates the designation of the Corridor in 1986. BLAC was only the second National Heritage Corridor designated. No heritage area program or set of guidelines existed at that time. Certainly the Commissioners had no expectation of becoming self-sustaining after five years when Congress first reauthorized the Commission, or even after ten years, when Congress extended the Commission's authorization in 1996. Early on, Commission reviews suggested that it would take at least 20 years to make the Corridor's legislative mission and vision sustainable without Federal funding through the National Park Service. Even that estimate failed to fully reflect the scale of the task faced by the Commission.

While the newer heritage areas can take advantage of a well-established template, BLAC spent much of its early years creating that template. The first Management Plan, begun from scratch, took 18 months to be completed and approved. Newer areas can complete these tasks in much less time because of policies and procedures that were pioneered and shared by BLAC. The Sustainability Study undertaken by the BLAC was precedent setting. BLAC was the first area to conceive of such an open "audit" of their practices and procedures and to invite the public to help critique the effectiveness of the Heritage Corridor and say how they would like to see the Commission operate in the future. The Conservation Study Institute was engaged because of its talent and ability to act as a third party reviewer.

Each Heritage Area must have a management entity appropriate to the landscape and people within its borders. For BLAC, that has been a Federal commission because of the bi-state nature of its operations. BLAC has had a close alliance with the National Park Service, and its citizens sent a resounding note of confidence in this management entity and NPS partnership. BLAC has requested a Special Resource Study be conducted to help determine the Corridor's future relationship with the NPS, and NPS has endorsed this position to your Committee. BLAC intends to use its next reauthorization period to study and recommend future management options for the Corridor. Because 5 communities, and most importantly the City of Worcester, the second largest city in New England, have only participated in the Heritage Corridor for 10 years, and the northern leg of the Corridor is, therefore, not completed, the Commission believes that 10 years, rather than 5 years, would be more appropriate to the job left to complete. River restoration and the completion of the northern section of the Blackstone Bikeway that will link the entire Heritage Corridor and join with the East Coast Greenway require the leadership and convening abilities of the Blackstone Corridor Commission.

APPENDIX II

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

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ADAMS STATE COLLEGE,  
*Alamosa, CO, June 16, 2006.*

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

On behalf of Adams State College, I am pleased to lend our support to the efforts of the Sangre de Cristo National Historical Area Committee. We wholeheartedly endorse congressional designation of the tri-county area of Conejo Costilla, and Alamosa counties as a national historic area. This designation will greatly enhance the historical, recreation, and economic situations of this area.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 719-587-7341.

Sincerely,

DAVID P. SVALDI,  
*President.*

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CITY OF ALAMOSA,  
*Alamosa, CO, June 16, 2006.*

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

On behalf of the City of Alamosa, please accept this as support for the efforts toward Sangre de Cristo National Historic Designation Area of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla Counties.

The designation of this area will enhance tourism, heritage, recreation, and economic development of the entire San Luis Valley.

Please give this request your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

FARRIS J. BERVIG,  
*Mayor of the City of Alamosa.*

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THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,  
*Boston, MA, June 21, 2006.*

Hon. CRAIG THOMAS,  
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Parks, Historic Preservation and Recreation, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATOR THOMAS: I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 1387, relative to the reauthorization of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and Commission.

As you know, the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor serves the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the State of Rhode Island. The work of the Commission has had substantial, positive economic and environmental impacts on our states, and has helped to further interstate cooperation on a number of fronts.

The Commission's efforts have demonstrably improved water quality, opening up new opportunities for business, tourism and outdoor recreation. Notably, the numbers of fish and wild animals have increased, and Great Blue Herons and Bald Eagles have returned to the river valley. Much of this progress has been the direct result of the Commission's involvement and dedicated work. Passage of SB 1387 would affirm the federal government's commitment to this tremendously successful partnership.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I would urge your favorable consideration of this important piece of legislation.  
Sincerely,

MITT ROMNEY,  
*Governor.*

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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
*Washington, DC, June 22, 2006.*

Hon. CRAIG THOMAS,  
*Chairman, Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Washington, DC.*

Hon. DANIEL K. AKAKA,  
*Ranking Member, Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMAS AND RANKING MEMBER AKAKA: We are writing to commend the Subcommittee for scheduling a hearing on S. 1387, the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Reauthorization Act of 2005, and we respectfully urge you to report this legislation favorably.

The Blackstone River Valley Heritage Corridor was established in 1986 in recognition of the national importance of the region as the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. Redesignated in 1999 as the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, the Corridor has become a national model of how the National Park Service, without federal ownership and regulations, can work cooperatively with local communities and a multi-agency partnership to create a seamless system of parks, preserved historic sites, and open spaces that enhance the protection and understanding of America's heritage. The Corridor is managed by a bi-state, 19 member federal Commission, which represents federal, state, and local authorities and citizens from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the State of Rhode Island. The Commission's federal stature has made it an extremely effective management entity for coordinating two states and 24 local governments around a common action agenda.

As you may know, the authorization and funding for the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Commission are scheduled to expire November 2006 unless reauthorized by Congress. S. 1387 would provide for the update of the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Corridor, extend the authority of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for an additional ten years, and authorize operating and development funding appropriations to enable the Commission to continue its work.

The John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor is important to Rhode Island and Massachusetts, as well as to our entire nation. Please let us extend to you our appreciation in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

JAMES P. MCGOVERN,  
PATRICK J. KENNEDY,  
RICHARD E. NEAL,  
JAMES R. LANGEVIN,  
*Members of Congress.*

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U.S. SENATE,  
*Washington, DC, June 22, 2006.*

Hon. CRAIG THOMAS,  
*Chairman, Subcommittee on National Parks, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN THOMAS: As cosponsors to Senate Bill 1721, the National Heritage Area Extension Act of 2005, we would like to take this opportunity to convey our strong support for reauthorization of the National Heritage Areas Program.

The National Heritage Areas Program has been very beneficial to communities throughout the country. Heritage Areas are proven methods of community preservation and revitalization.

Currently, Iowa is fortunate to have the America's Agricultural Heritage Partnership. This Heritage Area encompasses a 37-county region and covers more than 20,000 square miles. The Partnership is helping to preserve significant agricultural and industrial events from our history. America's Agricultural Heritage Partnership

was part of the originally authorized Heritage Areas in the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Act of 1996.

In addition, the Mississippi River National Heritage Area would be established to serve the counties bordering this mighty river in ten states, one of which is Iowa. This Heritage Area would help inventory, improve, promote, and preserve the resources and rich culture along our nation's river.

We appreciate your consideration of this program before your committee this week, and hope that you are able to support the National Heritage Area Extension Act of 2005. Please call on us if you need additional information, or if we can be of service as you work to reauthorize program.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,  
TOM HARKIN,  
*U.S. Senators.*

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STATEMENT OF ANNIE C. HARRIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ESSEX NATIONAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee, I am pleased to submit the following written testimony in support of S. 1721, a bill to amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996. I am writing in favor of the provisions included in S. 1721 to extend reauthorization for the nine National Heritage Areas, including the Essex National Heritage Area, authorized under this Act to receive up to \$10 million in appropriations over a fifteen year period.

I serve as the Executive Director of the Essex National Heritage Commission. The Commission is the designated management entity for the Essex National Heritage Area. Operating under the oversight of a 25 member board of trustees, 150 commissioners and 62 ex officio commissioners, the Commission coordinates preservation, conservation and education programs in throughout this 500 square mile area north of Boston, Massachusetts. Essex National Heritage Area, along with the other eight National Heritage Areas established in the Act of 1996, has an impressive ten-year track record in preserving America's heritage through innovative and successful public-private partnerships at every level of government. S. 1721 would allow this worthwhile work to continue by extending the federal funding and permitting the National Park Service to continue to participate this important work.

There are four questions that are frequently asked about the National Heritage Areas. These questions go to the core of the National Heritage Areas. I have answered them below and illustrated my answers with examples from the Essex National Heritage Area.

1. What are the public benefits of the National Heritage Areas?
2. Does the National Park Service derive significant benefits from the National Heritage Areas?
3. Why should Congress consider reauthorizing the National Heritage Areas?
4. Do National Heritage Areas restrict private property rights?

1. *What are the public benefits of the National Heritage Areas?* The National Heritage Areas provide significant national, regional and local benefits to the American public in these ways:

- a. NHAs preserve nationally important historic sites, develop regional recreational facilities (such as bikeways and trails), and foster community revitalization through the rehabilitation of historic and cultural resources.
- b. NHAs leverage their annual federal appropriations, regularly attracting between \$3 to \$12 in private, local and state investment for every \$1 of federal investment 'seeded' in the Area.
- c. NHAs build dynamic civic partnerships by bringing together hundreds of volunteers, businesspeople, educators and elected officials to work together to revitalize their communities.

Examples: The Essex National Heritage Area contains more than 9,200 National Register of Historic Places properties, 607 National Register districts and 24 National Historic Landmarks. The Area interprets three nationally significant themes: Early European settlement, American maritime history in the Great Age of Sail and the early Industrial Revolution, and conserves four major heritage landscapes. The Essex National Heritage Area plays a critical role in facilitating collaborative programs across the region including an extensive Heritage Landscape Inventory that identified more than 1,300 resources, two scenic byways designations, and thirty miles of proposed rail-trail development. The

ENHA 'Trails & Sails' event annually attracts more than 3,500 people, introducing them to the rich heritage resources of the region and engaging them in the long-term preservation and promotion of these significant assets. Bikeways, trails, regional tourism, downtown revitalization, education and recreation are all important aspects of ENHA. In 2005 alone, the Essex National Heritage Area hosted 1,182,000 cultural visitors, oversaw 10,500 hours of volunteer time, managed 369 formal and informal partnerships, made 33 direct grants, worked on projects that improved 37 National Register properties, and offered education programs that engaged 340 people. During the past 10 years, the Essex National Heritage Area has gained extraordinary momentum but the work is ongoing and should not be stopped in mid stride.

2. *Does the National Park Service derive significant benefits from the National Heritage Areas?* The National Park Service derives important benefits from their affiliation with the National Heritage Areas, and many of these have been identified in the "Report by the National Park System Advisory Board's Partnership Committee" which notes that "National Heritage Areas contribute to the mission of the National Park Service" and "the National Heritage Area approach . . . can serve as a model for achieving NPS collaborative conservation goals." It is our experience that the following benefits result from the collaboration between the National Heritage Areas and the Park Service:

- a. NHAs build goodwill for the National Park Service especially in areas where the Heritage Area is adjacent to or surrounds the NPS site.
- b. NHAs promote partnerships between residents and the Park Service on a broad range of projects from small, one time events to large volunteer maintenance and construction projects.
- c. NHAs often provide significant additional resources, monetary and otherwise, to the Park Service.
- d. NHAs support the mission of the Park Service and allow many of parks to focus on their core resources more effectively.

Examples: The Essex National Heritage Area partners with the National Park Service's Salem Maritime National Historic Site and Saugus Ironworks National Historic Site on a wide variety of projects. There is the tall ship "Friendship" volunteer program where 200+ volunteers maintain and sail the NPS tall ship thus saving the Salem Maritime NH Site thousands of dollars each year in maintenance and operations costs. Recently, the Essex National Heritage Area has provided assistance to Salem Maritime for the acquisition of a dock for their Visiting Vessels program, an important NPS initiative developed to generate new educational activities and revenue for the park. Another example is the interpretive thematic trails that ENHA has developed cooperatively with NPS that are designed to educate residents and visitors about the history of the park and the surrounding region and that also encourage the economic benefits of increased visitation. The Essex National Heritage Area works cooperatively with local area colleges, the National Archives regional office and the National Park Service on exhibits and primary source research projects, and this in turn enables the NPS to have new exhibits and educational programs at no cost to the park.

3. *Why should Congress consider reauthorizing the National Heritage Areas?* The work of the National Heritage Areas is not complete. While there are many successful initiatives and projects, ten years is too short a time to build and maintain hundreds of lasting collaborative partnerships. The National Heritage Areas should not be stopped in mid-stream when so much more can be accomplished by continuing the relationship with the National Park Service and the small investment of federal funds.

- a. NHAs have proven to be very effective historic preservation and resource conservation tools. Hundreds of National Register properties have benefited from the support of the National Heritage Areas. Miles of trails have been cleared and improved by the Areas. A multitude of cultural organizations and civic groups have revitalized their communities with the guidance of the National Heritage Areas. These improvements benefit not only the residents but also the thousands of tourists who visit the National Heritage Areas every year (68 million visitors at last count).
- b. NHAs have built hundreds of regional and local partnerships to carry out their work. These relationships are usually carefully nurtured over many years, and often include small investments of 'seed' funding to assist the partners in the cooperative projects. These 'seed' funds allow the National Heritage Areas

to build trust among formerly competing organizations, and in turn, this stability has enabled these organizations to attract additional matching funds from a wide range of new sources. All of the National Heritage Areas are working diligently to develop sustainable sources of revenue, but it is too early in the process to zero out the federal funding. These funds provide a stable platform upon which many new cooperative ventures are being built. All of the partners need to remain 'at the table' for a while longer so that this model can continue to mature.

c. NHAs and their special affiliation with the National Park Service are designated in perpetuity. The quality of the National Heritage Area has a direct bearing on the public's perception of the National Park Service. Up to this point, the National Heritage Areas have reflected well on the Park Service, however without any public assistance for their base operations and programming, this may not be the case in the future.

d. NHAs have oversight from the National Park Service through Cooperative Agreements that specify the federal funding and the annual work program for each National Heritage Area. With no federal appropriations, there will not be Cooperative Agreements and the Park Service will not be in a position to provide oversight to the work of the National Heritage Areas despite their continuing affiliation with the Service.

Example: To date the Essex National Heritage Area has made 228 direct grants to historic preservation projects, heritage education programs, trail development, interpretative projects and historical records preservation. These grants total \$1,351,000 and have leveraged \$4,123,000 in additional direct investment in these resources. The National Heritage also makes other types of grants such as twenty-one survey and planning grants to archival organizations where hundreds of thousands of nationally significant historical records are housed and grants to the regional visitor centers who collaborate with the National Park Service to welcome tourists to the Area. In addition, the Essex National Heritage Area maintains over 300 formal and informal partnerships that promote the heritage resources in the region in broad array of projects ranging from bikeway planning to seed funding. The National Heritage Area works closely with the National Park Service's Salem Maritime and Saugus Ironworks National Historic Sites on education, interpretation, and preservation projects that are outlined in the annual cooperative agreement. These projects feature the historic themes of the two National Park units and integrate the park themes into projects with other regional partners. For example, "Using Essex History" highlights Salem and Saugus along with other significant historic sites in a multi-year project that links teaching history to the statewide standards testing. The "100 Milestones" celebrates many significant accomplishments in regional preservation and community engagement including the National Park Service's resources.

4. *Do National Heritage Areas restrict private property rights?* The simple answer is no; there is nothing in the National Heritage Area legislation or in their practice that restricts the rights of property owners to own, develop or change their property. Some people confuse the limitations imposed by local authorities such as zoning and planning boards as somehow being the purview of the National Heritage Area. This is incorrect.

a. NHAs do not have any regulatory authority explicit or implied in the legislative acts that established them.

b. NHAs do not have legal authority to tell private property owners what they can and cannot do, nor is there any evidence that they try to do this.

c. NHAs are not mandated to affiliate with other regulatory federal and state agencies. In fact, the cooperative nature of the work of the National Heritage Areas dictates the opposite.

Example: The Essex National Heritage Area works to inspire residents and their communities to cooperative in preserving and promoting their heritage resources. The Area's collaborative partnerships seek to demonstrate the benefits derived from heritage while they reframe from interfering with local decisions. With the hundreds of formal and informal partners working on matters that affect a substantial portion of the 9,000 national register properties in this region as well as acres of open space and trails, the Essex National Heritage Area has a proven track record of excellent relationships with all levels of government and civic organizations, and at no time is there evidence that this work has limited the rights of private property owners to do what they wish with their property.

*In conclusion:* The work of the National Heritage Areas requires that all of the partners in this exciting experiment continue to cooperate and work together. The successes to date are clearly documented, but the challenges for heritage preservation and community revitalization are still many. This is a work-in-progress that should be continued. Perhaps no group has said it better than the National Park System Advisory Board's Partnerships Committee. In their recent study of the National Heritage Areas, they concluded that "the National Park Service can benefit from the National Heritage Areas approach to conserving nationally important living landscapes and cultures" and they recommended that the Director of the National Park Service and by extension the Park Service and Congress:

1. Create a home for Heritage Areas in the Park System
2. Commit to Heritage Areas for the long-term
3. Provide for unique legislative authorities
4. Extend our reach to gateway communities
5. Support research and understand partnership networks.

Their study recognizes that "National Heritage Areas are founded on consensus-based planning, local commitments and a network of long-term partnerships. For this reason a long-term commitment is needed to achieve meaningful progress." The National Heritage Areas endorse this conclusion and urge this committee to reauthorize the nine National Heritage Areas established in the Act of 1996.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of this committee, thank you for your consideration of this matter and for the opportunity to make a written presentation to the committee.

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#### STATEMENT OF THE CONEJOS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: We the Conejos County Board of Commissioners would like to submit the following testimony in support of Senate bill 2037 for the purpose of establishing the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area in the San Luis Valley located in Southern Colorado.

The passage of this bill would enhance the opportunity this designation would bring to the Counties of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla. The designation would bring economic opportunities to the two poorest counties in the state of Colorado. Although, we have been called the poorest counties in the state, we are rich in culture and heritage. The opportunity to share our area's history and culture would entice tourism into our communities and bring economic value to our local businesses and agricultural community.

The idea of a National Heritage Area concept was introduced by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization called the Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway (LCA). Through the efforts of the LCA a steering committee was formed, this was the beginning of much hard work and perseverance to make the heritage area a reality. Hundred of hours in planning, research, committee and community meetings took place over a 5 year period of time. Over time much support was gained from citizens, organizations, local and regional governments. All groups recognized the need to capture and preserve the unique blend of the native American, Hispano and Anglo settlement and to preserve the history, art and traditions or future generations.

"The mission of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is to promote, preserve, protect, document and interpret its profound historical, religious, environmental, geographic, geologic, cultural, and linguistic resources". The efforts will contribute to the overall national story engender a spirit of pride and self-reliance, and create a legacy in the Colorado counties of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla.

A feasibility study that was required by both the U.S. Congress and the National Park Service was produced by using local and regional professional writers, historians, academics and local citizens, working on a volunteer basis.

The heritage and history of the area has been well preserved through the isolation of the San Luis Valley and through local preservation and conservation efforts.

The abundance of historical and cultural sites is described in detail in the feasibility study. Although there are many historical and cultural sites in Conejos County, the following are a few sites that have played an important part of early history in the State of Colorado:

- Pike's Stockade—the contact between the Anglo and Hispanic cultures in the San Luis Valley. Dating back to 1806 the encounter between Lt. Zebulon Pike and Spanish scouts, the stockade was constructed on the Conejos River.
- Our Lady of Guadalupe Church—considered the oldest Church in Colorado, established in 1856.

- The Lobato Bridge—one of three iron bridges remaining in the United States constructed in 1892. This bridge was the first bridge constructed in Colorado over the Rio Grande. Iron and lumber at a cost of \$8,400 was brought in by wagon.
- Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad—going into new New Mexico on February 1, 1881. The railroad not only conquered the Sangre de Cristos and the San Juan Mountains, but brought the blend and diverse ethnic and racial groups that still live in harmony today. This nineteenth-century steam railroad provides an adventure for tourists to enjoy yet another historical experience.

We the Conejos County Board of Commissioners and on behalf of our citizens ask and urge you to consider and approve S. 2037 bill designating the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.

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STATEMENT OF DARIUS ALLEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, ALAMOSA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, am Darius Allen, Chairman of the Board of Alamosa County Commissioners and in support of S. 2037, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Act, appreciate the opportunity to present my thoughts on behalf of the Board of Alamosa County Commissioners on the proposed legislation.

S. 2307 proposes to designate the counties of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla, Monte Vista National Wildlife Relive, the Baca National Wildlife Refuge, the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve as a National Heritage Area and to establish guidelines, standards and requirements for the Area. A local 501(c)(3) nonprofit board of directors will be put in place and would be designated as the management entity for the Heritage Area to work with the National Park Service and the many local heritage organizations.

The mission of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is to promote, preserve, protect, document and interpret its profound historical, religious, environmental, geographic, geologic, cultural and linguistic resources. These efforts will contribute to the overall national story, engender a spirit of pride and self reliance and create a legacy in the Colorado Counties of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla.

THE SANGRE DE CRISTO NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA IS RICH IN CULTURE AND HISTORY AND WORTHY OF PRESERVATION

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage located in the South Central part of Colorado is rich in culture and natural resources. The people of the San Luis Valley have found ways to preserve their cultural and natural heritage. There are historical structures and land that still exist today such as Mexican land grants, the narrow gauge railroad also known as the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroads Pikes Stockade, Great Sand Dunes National Park and Fort Garland. The language, art, architecture, religious tradition of the Native American early Spanish colonists and Mexican settlers is still alive and thriving in the area. The towns of San Luis and Antonito, Colorado are the two oldest settlements in the State. The area still contain moradas (place of worship, the oldest church in Colorado, murals, the first mercantile of the region, the first water right and La Vega (the last remaining commons area in the United States that is still used for its original purposes) which is located in Costilla County, Colorado. Festivals and religious celebrations including century old procession of Los Hermanos Penitentes are still hosted today.

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area inhabited over 11,000 years by native people, including Ute, Navajo, Apache, Tiwa, Tewa, Comanche, Kiowa and Arapaho remains central to native cultures and is home to Mount Blanca (one of Colorado's 14,000 foot peaks) also known as Sisnaajini, a sacred mountain for Navajo and other people that marks the eastern boundary of their world. There are also petroglyphs and pictographs along the Rio Grande telling stories and cosmologies of early inhabitants. The San Luis Valley is beautiful in nature surrounded by the San Juan and Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The San Luis Valley is one of the largest alpine valleys in North America and has an abundance of natural resources.

I believe the San Luis Valley is very unique because of the preservation of culture and the strong historical significance. The San Luis Valley history has been well preserved through isolation and conservation efforts.

A volunteer steering committee worked hundreds of hours in committee meetings, research, and public meetings to organize and gain support for this effort. There are resolutions from local governments that show support with the feasibility study that has been submitted to Congress. I strongly urge you to pass Senate Bill 2037. This

will enable the people to preserve the rich culture and natural resources of the San Luis Valley. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to submit a written testimony.

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STATEMENT OF DONALD P. SHORT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SILOS & SMOKESTACKS  
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

America's Agricultural Heritage Partnership, also known as Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area, is a thirty seven county area located in Northeast Iowa. We are the second largest of the twenty seven National Heritage Areas and the only one telling the story of American agriculture through a network of over ninety partner sites covering more than 20,000 square miles.

Silos & Smokestacks is proud to have distributed over \$1.3 million to assist partner sites in telling the story of American agriculture through grant programs. Our cash matching requirements for this program has created a five to one multiplier effect.

Launched in 2001, CampSilos (campsilos.org) educational website targets students in grades 4-8 with online educational material related to all aspects of agriculture. Student activities, teacher lesson plans and virtual field trips are featured on the website with over forty thousand (40,000) hits per month. The National Education Association recognized CampSilos with a national 2nd place award in 2003 for quality education.

SSNHA is also nationally recognized for its L.I.F.E. (Living an Iowa Farm Experience) Tours group travel program creating relationships with several foreign countries including Denmark, Norway, France, England, Japan, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Ireland and now (October, 06) Argentina. Life Tours has definitely impacted Iowa's six billion dollar tourism industry yet state funding ranks third from the bottom nationally.

Silos & Smokestacks acts as a facilitator for small communities. We provide technical assistance, hospitality training workshops and grant opportunities to help them become self supporting. Our support helps them "jump-start" projects that may never become a reality for small town Iowa to again prosper.

SUMMARY

Silos & Smokestacks provides the tools for its people and communities to preserve and tell the story of American agriculture. Fewer people are living in rural areas. As farming becomes more automated, the people are separated farther from how their food is grown and processed. Silos is the critical link to preserve the stories and the culture.

The most difficult dollars to raise are for administrative expenses. Nobody wants to fund an organization's daily operating. When federal funding stops the wheels could slowly come to a halt. Federal funding brings other partners to the table and has enabled us to create a match of the fed funds. The small rural communities do not have the audiences to fund many of the initiatives needed for sustainability. Heritage Areas provide the critical supporting link.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Leadership Advisors and Partnership Panel of Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area, we're asking you to pass S. 1721.

Senators Tom Harkin and Chuck Grassley are strong supporters of this bill. A letter of support was delivered to your committee at the hearing on June 22, 2006.

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STATEMENT OF MICHELLE MCCOLLUM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SOUTH CAROLINA  
NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

The South Carolina National Heritage Corridor (SCNHC) is one of 27 congressionally designated heritage areas in the country. A 'National Heritage Area' is a place where natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography.

A recent National Park Service survey shows that almost 45 million people across 17 states live within a national heritage area. The very nature of the 'heritage area' structure engages communities to work in partnership across jurisdictional boundaries to improve their future by building on a shared past. This is a very unique and effective way for the federal government to impact local communities with minimal investment. It is important to note that a recently conducted GAO report stated that national heritage areas do not infringe upon private property rights. National

Heritage Areas allow the federal government to preserve, protect and promote the resources of these areas without acquiring or managing additional land or programs.

Many projects such as downtown revitalization, adaptive reuse of historic structures, preservation of diverse cultures, and conservation of unique and endangered landscapes are initiated within and by National Heritage Areas. Heritage Area programs also provide training to individuals, businesses, and non-profit organizations in grant writing, strategic planning, product development and marketing. Large scale technical assistance programs as well as local grant programs are part of the leveraging process used to build on the federal seed money. On average, National Heritage Areas leverage \$10 to every federal \$1 that is invested, proving that this program is an investment, not an expense, for the federal government. National Heritage Areas are also required to match federal funds dollar-for-dollar, thus spurring local investment and building a foundation for local partnerships.

The importance of the National Heritage Program cannot be overstated. Tourism is growing worldwide and Heritage Tourism is the fastest growing segment and the segment with the greatest per capita expenditures by tourists. Unless our nation focuses on this segment of worldwide tourism we will be losing ground to other countries which are putting major emphasis on this growing trend.

The SCNHC was designated in the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996. The program began under the leadership of the SC Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and has now moved under the direct management of a public/private partnership Board of Directors. This has been a very important move for our organization and is part of the overall strategy to become self sustaining.

The development of the SCNHC has been an important program for our state. Not only does the SCNHC preserve and promote "pride of place" in South Carolina, it also tells a national story as our state is one of the original thirteen colonies and one which has had a disproportionately large impact on national events. Unlike many other National Heritage Areas, the SCNHC is not a single destination, but a wide variety of sites and attractions. These locations are extremely diverse, and they are in many cases "authentic" and "raw" as opposed to "manmade" and "polished". Many facets of historic and rural "Americana" can be experienced within the boundaries of our heritage area. Our themes include Native American History; Frontier and Colonial Life; Military History; Transportation; and African American History. Few programs interpret this level and depth of history and provide such a unique and educational experience.

By weaving the threads of South Carolina's history, culture and natural resources together in a defined area, the state has added to its available tourism product and increased visitation and spending. According to a study prepared by Lane, Frenchman and Associates of Boston, completion of the SCNHC 10 year management plan will mean as many as 700,000 additional visitor days and will generate \$83.5 million in new tourism revenue each year; rising, of course, as the work continues.

The SCNHC currently works with over 70 local communities and over 120 designated sites to build a foundation that protects area resources and creates quality community infrastructure. Since our inception we have successfully completed over 100 large-scale projects, and are currently working on over 40 more, while also providing programming and major marketing efforts. Product development in the Corridor has centered chiefly on the creation of tourism infrastructure in areas of the state that have not always seen the benefits of tourism. As tourism 'product' is developed, it is phased into our Discovery System, the mechanism that provides regional interpretation, way-finding and visitors services to tourism locations in our 14-county area.

This system is continuously gaining momentum and will ultimately have a major economic impact on the heritage area and the state. At this time, half of our system has been installed and we need more time and additional federal investment in order to complete the foundational structure of the program. This will include the design, fabrication and installation of visitor centers, interpretive signage and directional signage in the final two of our four regions. This will also include the completion of over 100 large-scale projects in the rural areas of our state and the development and execution of a major marketing program.

The entrepreneurial spirit of this program has successfully engaged local citizens and they are working together through public-private partnerships to preserve and promote the structures, places and traditions that provide a sense of place and a unique quality of life for South Carolinians. The SCNHC has served as an incubator and a catalyst for heritage tourism development across the state. The efforts within our heritage area have led to the development of numerous statewide initiatives such as the South Carolina Farmer's Association and the South Carolina Artisans Consortium. It has also placed an emphasis on protecting and celebrating the diver-

sity of cultures in South Carolina such as the influence of Native American, African and Caribbean culture in today's society. Most importantly, our efforts have stimulated the economy by diversifying economic development initiatives in areas that are struggling with the loss of manufacturing jobs and a changing economy.

Some examples of our accomplishments include:

- The development of two Regional Discovery Centers that serve as visitor's centers as well as rural tourism development centers. Programming, special events and training workshops are held regularly at these locations.
- The development of a large-scale interpretation system that links together over 100 sites and attractions throughout 10 counties of our heritage area. This system is complimented by a comprehensive way-finding signage program. Development is still needed in four of our counties.
- The restoration and adaptive reuse of major historic structures within our heritage area to include the Walhalla Civic Auditorium, the Anderson Arts Warehouse, the Springfield High School and the Lourie Theatre. These four structures alone have diversified economic opportunities, created jobs and increased the quality of life for their communities.
- Awarded over \$2.5 million in grants to local projects. Once complete, these projects are phased into our program and marketed for visitation and development.
- Created a partnership with Barbados to highlight the influx of Caribbean influence into our heritage area and ultimately the nation. A joint development and marketing plan is currently being created to spur European visitation to both countries based on our shared past.
- Provided much needed technical assistance and training to our communities in areas such as product development, marketing, visitor's services and grant writing. This type of assistance is on-going and has a major impact on rural communities.
- As a compliment to our economic development initiatives, educational programs have been implemented in local schools and our children's program currently has over 450 members.

It is extremely important to point out that the SCNHC comprises 14 counties across the state of South Carolina. The impacts of the Corridor have been so great for our communities that three additional counties have expressed an interest in being added to our program. This will enlarge our Heritage Area to 17 counties and a length of over 450 miles. Again, unlike many other heritage areas, the federal investment into our program is spread out not only geographically, but also programmatically. The size of our Heritage Area also increases the time needed to become fully established and self-sustaining. Although we have made significant progress, 10 years is certainly not enough time to complete a project of this proportion.

Just as all of the Heritage Areas included in S. 1721, the SCNHC was established with a 10-year Management Plan to guide the work of the program for the next 10 years. This was not meant to be a limitation on the life of the National Heritage Area, only a limitation on the timeframe of the plan. At the end, or near the conclusion of the Management Plan, the National Heritage Areas were charged with the responsibility to chart out their next 10-year strategy. Since the designation of the "Class of 1996" the individual heritage areas, partner organizations and the National Park Service have all discovered better, more effective ways to operate the heritage area program and many of these points are addressed in the Heritage Area program bill, S. 243. At this critical point, we need to ensure that the "Class of 1996" is not penalized for being the test case for the movement before these issues were resolved.

I cannot emphasize enough that the SCNHC understands the need to become self sustaining and we are currently in the process of conducting a new 10 year management plan that will include a sustainability plan. This sustainability plan will map out a strategy for diversifying funding sources for the program and will solidify the on-going development of our heritage area. Because of the fact that the management of our program has only recently transferred from a government agency to a public/private Board of Directors, precious years were lost in which sustainability was not a major focus. I assure you that if granted reauthorization our Board of Directors will maximize the federal investment and will become self sustaining by the end of the authorization period.

Our new management plan has not been completed at this point; however, several goals have already been established:

- Create and implement a strategy for diversification of funding sources for the sustainability of the SCNHC.

- Complete the development of the SCNHC Discovery System throughout the entire heritage area to include two (2) additional visitor centers and interpretive signage at over 150 additional locations.
- Implement a tourism plan with the country of Barbados to spur European visitation to both countries based on the “Carolina—Caribbean Connection”.
- Develop Corridor-wide educational programs to be implemented at partner locations and in school-districts within our heritage area.
- Work with the SC Departments of Commerce, Transportation, Arts, and Parks, Recreation and Tourism to further solidify cultural tourism as an economic development tool in the state through major product development and marketing efforts.

Heritage tourism development, like all other economic development initiatives, is an on-going process. It is also a lengthy process. It takes time to build the type of grassroots support and participation that makes the heritage area program successful. This is particularly true of heritage areas encompassing numerous counties and numerous themes. The large-scale projects that are initiated by heritage areas also take many years to complete as preservation and conservation involves the input and assistance of many citizens, organizations and government entities.

The federal funding appropriated to national heritage areas serves as the foundation for securing state, local and private investment. If this foundation is removed, it will surely impede, and could possibly halt, the unprecedented work that has been accomplished thus far. The South Carolina National Heritage Corridor has a proven record of successfully leveraging the federal investment AND improving the communities that we serve. For these reasons, reauthorization is a necessary and logical request.

The Board of Directors of the SCNHC, the fourteen counties and numerous municipalities within the boundaries of our heritage area, and the many citizens of our state appreciate the support and assistance of Congress over the past ten years and respectfully request that Congress review our successes, assess the impact of the federal investment and grant reauthorization through the passage of S. 1721 so that our important work can continue.