

Calendar No. 368

106TH CONGRESS }
1st Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
106-212

WORLD WAR VETERANS PARK AT MILLER FIELD

NOVEMBER 2, 1999.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 592]

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, to which was referred the Act (H.R. 592) to designate a portion of Gateway National Recreation Area as “World War Veterans Park at Miller Field”, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the Act do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE

The purpose of H.R. 592, as ordered reported, is to redesignate Miller Field within the Staten Island Unit of Gateway National Recreation Area, as “World War Veterans Park at Miller Field.”

BACKGROUND AND NEED

Gateway National Recreation Area, located in New York and New Jersey, was established in 1972 as a unit of the National Park System. This National Recreation Area contains units in Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island, New York, and in New Jersey. The Staten Island Unit includes Fort Wadsworth, Miller Field, Great Kills Park and two small islands. Both Miller Field and Great Kills Park are former New York City parks and are popular sites for recreational activities.

H.R. 592 redesignates Miller Field as “World War Veterans Park at Miller Field” to honor World War II and other military veterans.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

H.R. 592 was passed by the House of Representatives on June 30, 1999 and was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on July 12, 1999.

On October 13, 1999 the Subcommittee on National Parks, Historic Preservation, and Recreation held a hearing on H.R. 592 and on companion legislation, S. 497, sponsored by Senator Moynihan.

At its business meeting on October 20, 1999, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered H.R. 592, favorably reported, without amendment.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, in open business session on October 20, 1999, by a unanimous voice vote of a quorum present, recommends that the Senate pass H.R. 592.

SUMMARY OF THE MEASURE

H.R. 592 amends Section 3(b) of Public Law 92-592 to redesignate Miller Field as "World War Veterans Park at Miller Field."

COST AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS

The following estimate of costs of this measure has been provided by the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, October 26, 1999.

Hon. FRANK H. MURKOWSKI,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 592, an act to designate a portion of Gateway National Recreation Area as World War Veterans Park at Miller Field.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis.

Sincerely,

BARRY B. ANDERSON
(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

H.R. 592—An act to designate a portion of Gateway National Recreation Area as World War Veterans Park at Miller Field

H.R. 592 would designate a portion of the Gateway National Recreation Area (currently known as Miller Field) as the World War Veterans Park at Miller Field.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 592 would have no significant impact on the federal budget. The act would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. H.R. 592 contains no intergovernmental or pri-

vate-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would have no significant impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal government.

On June 11, 1999, CBO prepared a cost estimate for H.R. 592 as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on June 9, 1999. The two versions of the legislation are identical, as are the cost estimates.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

REGULATORY IMPACT EVALUATION

In compliance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee makes the following evaluation of the regulatory impact which would be incurred in carrying out H.R. 592. The bill is not a regulatory measure in the sense of imposing Government-established standards of significant economic responsibilities on private individuals and businesses.

No personal information would be collected in administering the program. Therefore, there would be no impact on personal privacy.

Little, if any, additional paperwork would result from enactment of H.R. 592, as ordered reported.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

The legislative report received by the Committee from the Department of the Interior setting forth Executive agency recommendations relating to the H.R. 592, is set forth below:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, DC, October 15, 1999.

Hon. FRANK MURKOWSKI,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter responds to your request for views on H.R. 592, a bill rename Miller Field, a site within Gateway National Recreation Area on Staten Island in New York, as World War Veterans Park at Miller Field.

The Department supports enactment of H.R. 592, as passed by the House. H.R. 592, as originally introduced, would have renamed Great Kills Park, a site within Gateway National Recreation Area on Staten Island in New York, as World War II Veterans Park at Great Kills. However, H.R. 592, as passed by the House of Representatives, renames Miller Field, another site within Gateway National Recreation Area on Staten Island in New York, as World War Veterans Park at Miller Field.

The Department does not support renaming Great Kills Park as the World War II Veterans Park at Great Kills because Great Kills Park has no specific connection to World War II Veterans. In 1973, the Gateway National Recreation Area's enabling legislation authorized the acceptance and inclusion of Great Kills Park, then a city park, into the National Park System. The site was transferred in 1974, and has since been managed by the National Park Service.

Great Kills Park is a 960-acre site on Staten Island in New York that includes a large natural area featuring migratory birds and coastal vegetation, a swimming beach, athletic fields and walking and hiking trails. The area around the park has been known as Great Kills for four centuries. Local Dutch settlers named the area Great Kills in the 1600s after a nearby body of water. "Kill" or "kell" in old Dutch means a stream, creek or tributary. According to historic periodicals, "In 1865, the village was named Great Kills, after the body of water that lies to the east." This reference is to what is now called Great Kills Harbor, located within the federal park boundary, east of the Great Kills Village site.

The renaming of Great Kills as "World War II Veterans Park at Great Kills" is not descriptive of the site or of its historical associations. NPS policy regarding naming of sites and memorializing groups is that such a designation is appropriate when the association between the site and the group is of transcendent importance and where the surrounding or site are relevant to the subject or group to be commemorated. That is the policy that governs the NPS's own designation decisions, and the recommendations we make to Congress.

While the NPS does not in any way wish to diminish the importance of World War II Veterans or to interfere with commemorating their service to America, there are other sites within the National Park System and elsewhere which are more suitable for this commemoration. To designate Great Kills Park in recognition of World War II veterans could be misleading because it suggests historical connections that do not exist. We do feel there are suitable locations within Gateway NRA on Staten Island where veterans of this era might be recognized. Renaming Miller Field, which was an U.S. Army airfield and base from 1922–1969, certainly would be appropriate. During World War II, Miller Field was involved in preparing military equipment for shipping overseas, supported warehouses and temporary housing, and was the location of anti-aircraft guns to protect the area from invasion. The NPS recently approved the installation of a monument to the 102nd Observation Squadron, located at Miller Field until 1940. Miller Field would be an appropriate place to recognize World War II Veterans and other military veterans.

The NPS worked with the House Resources Committee and the House sponsor of H.R. 592, Representative Vito Fossella, to craft a compromise bill. The result is H.R. 592 as passed by the House. H.R. 592 designates Miller Field on Staten Island as "World War Veterans Park at Miller Field." This designation recognizes the contributions of veterans and addresses the NPS's concern that a site's name have an historical connection to the place. We support H.R. 592 as passed by the House and recommend that the Senate pass similar legislation.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the presentation of this report from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely,

DONALD J. BARRY,
Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law by H.R. 592, as ordered reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italic, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman);

[Public Law 92-592, October 27, 1972]

* * * * *

SEC. 3. (a) * * *

(b)(1) The Secretary shall designate the principal visitor center within the recreation area as the "William Fitts Ryan Visitor Center" in commemoration of the leadership and contributions which Representative William Fitts Ryan made with respect to the creation and establishment of this public recreation area. To inform the public of contributions of Representative Ryan to the creation of the recreation area, the Secretary shall provide such signs, markers, maps, interpretive materials, literature, and programs as he deems appropriate. Not later than December 31, 1980, the Secretary shall take such additional actions as he deems appropriate to recognize and commemorate the contributions of Representative Ryan to the recreation area.

(2) *The portion of the Staten Island Unit of the recreation area known as Miller Field is hereby designated as "World War Veterans Park and Miller Field". Any reference to such Miller Field in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to "World War Veterans Park at Miller Field".*

* * * * *

