

ST. CROIX NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA STUDY ACT

NOVEMBER 17, 2003.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. POMBO, from the Committee on Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1594]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1594) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the suitability and feasibility of establishing the St. Croix National Heritage Area in St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. ST. CROIX NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA STUDY.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “St. Croix National Heritage Area Study Act”.

(b) STUDY.—The Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with appropriate State historic preservation officers, States historical societies, and other appropriate organizations, shall conduct a study regarding the suitability and feasibility of designating the island of St. Croix as the St. Croix National Heritage Area. The study shall include analysis, documentation, and determination regarding whether the island of St. Croix—

(1) has an assemblage of natural, historic, and cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed through partnerships among public and private entities and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities;

(2) provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, historic, cultural, or scenic features;

(3) provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;

(4) contains resources important to the identified theme or themes of the island of St. Croix that retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;

(5) includes residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments that are involved in the planning, have developed a con-

ceptual financial plan that outlines the roles of all participants (including the Federal Government), and have demonstrated support for the concept of a national heritage area;

(6) has a potential management entity to work in partnership with residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments to develop a national heritage area consistent with continued local and State economic activity; and

(7) has a conceptual boundary map that is supported by the public.

(c) PRIVATE PROPERTY.—In conducting the study required by this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall analyze the potential impact that designation of the area as a national heritage area is likely to have on land within the proposed area or bordering the proposed area that is privately owned at the time that the study is conducted.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 3 fiscal years after the date on which funds are first made available for this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations as the Secretary deems appropriate.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 1594 is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the suitability and feasibility of establishing the St. Croix National Heritage Area in St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands, and for other purposes.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Of the three islands that comprise the United States Virgin Islands, St. Croix is the largest with a total area of 82 square miles. It is also the most remote. It is where Columbus first arrived in the Virgin Islands on his second voyage to the New World in November 1493, and was the home of the first Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton. Today, the island has two distinct towns—Christiansted built in 1734 and Frederiksted built in 1752. Christiansted is the onetime Danish West Indies capital and now a National Historic Site. Just off the coast of Christiansted is Buck Island, the only U.S. underwater National Monument. Frederiksted, is known for its shoreline, deep port, and famous palm trees. The island has become a popular tourist destination with its increasing number of historic and cultural resources.

H.R. 1594 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with appropriate State historic preservation officers, historical societies, and other appropriate organizations, to conduct a study regarding the suitability and feasibility of designating the island of St. Croix as the St. Croix National Heritage Area. Elements of the study include analysis, documentation, and determinations regarding whether the island of St. Croix has natural, historic, and cultural resources that together are worthy of recognition. The study also requires determinations on traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that are a valuable part of the national story as well as any outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, historic, cultural, or scenic features. Finally, the study would determine whether St. Croix includes the necessary support and involvement from residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments and that these entities have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles of all participants (including the Federal Government).

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 1594 was introduced on April 3, 2003, by Congresswoman Donna Christensen (D–VI). The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands. On September 16, 2003, the Subcommittee held a hearing on the bill. On October 21, 2003, the Subcommittee met to mark up the bill. Congressman George Radanovich (R–CA) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute that required the Secretary of the Interior to evaluate the impact a heritage area designation would have on private land-owners. The amendment was agreed to by unanimous consent. The bill, as amended, was then forwarded to the Full Committee by unanimous consent. On October 29, 2003, the Full Resources Committee met to consider the bill. No further amendments were offered. The bill, as amended, was then ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Resources’ oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. However, clause 3(d)(3)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

2. Congressional Budget Act. As required by clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures.

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. This bill does not authorize funding and therefore, clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives does not apply.

4. Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate. Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, November 10, 2003.

Hon. RICHARD W. POMBO,
*Chairman, Committee on Resources,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1594, the St. Croix National Heritage Area Study Act.

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

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS HOLTZ-EAKIN,
Director.

Enclosure.

H.R. 1594—St. Croix National Heritage Area Study Act

H.R. 1594 would direct the Department of the Interior to study the feasibility of designating the island of St. Croix as the St. Croix National Heritage Area. The proposed study would identify cultural and other resources on the island and would determine if there is a suitable entity to manage a national heritage area. The bill would require the department to report on its findings and recommendations within three years of receiving funds.

Assuming the availability of appropriated funds, CBO estimates that preparing the study and report required by H.R. 1594 would cost the federal government about \$300,000 over the next three years. The legislation would not affect direct spending or receipts.

H.R. 1594 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

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

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes in existing law.