

BUFFALO SOLDIERS IN THE NATIONAL PARKS STUDY
ACT

MAY 17, 2013.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of
the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, from the Committee on Natural
Resources, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 520]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 520) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 520 is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

H.R. 520, the Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks Study Act, would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to initiate a study to determine effective ways to commemorate America's Buffalo Soldiers and their role in helping to protect, build, and preserve America's national parks, as well as to ascertain the suitability and feasibility of potential historic sites, national landmarks, and a national historic trail related to their work.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Buffalo Soldiers, the all African-American cavalymen of the U.S. Army, rode from the San Francisco Presidio to the foothills of the Sierra Nevada

Mountains, serving as the protectors of several of the country's first national parks. Led by Lieutenant Colonel Charles Young, the first African-American superintendent of Yosemite National Park, these de facto rangers built trails, preserved the giant sequoias, and protected the wildlife of Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks.

H.R. 520 directs the Secretary of the Interior to research the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in protecting these nascent parks and examine, among other things, the possible creation of a national historic trail along the route used by these soldiers.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 520 was introduced on February 5, 2013, by Congresswoman Jackie Speier (D-CA). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation. On April 24, 2013, the Full Natural Resources Committee met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation was discharged by unanimous consent. No amendments were offered, and the bill was then adopted and 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 Natural Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(1) 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)(2)(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. 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:

H.R. 520—Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks Study Act

H.R. 520 would require the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a study of alternatives for honoring the Buffalo Soldiers (members of several African-American regiments within the U.S. Army established after the Civil War) in their role in the development of the National Park System. The U.S. Army, including regiments of Buffalo Soldiers, was responsible for protecting national parks before the National Park Service was established.

Based on information from the NPS and assuming the availability of appropriated funds, CBO estimates that conducting the study would cost about \$400,000 over the next three years. Enact-

ing H.R. 520 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

H.R. 520 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Martin von Gnechten. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

2. Section 308(a) of 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. Based on information from the NPS and assuming the availability of appropriated funds, CBO estimates that conducting the study would cost about \$400,000 over the next three years.

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks.

EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

COMPLIANCE WITH H. RES. 5

Directed Rule Making. The Chairman does not believe that this bill directs any executive branch official to conduct any specific rule-making proceedings.

Duplication of Existing Programs. This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program. Such program was not included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111-139 or identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95-220, as amended by Public Law 98-169) as relating to other programs.

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.