

GULF ISLANDS NATIONAL SEASHORE LAND EXCHANGE  
ACT OF 2017

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SEPTEMBER 11, 2017.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the  
State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. BISHOP of Utah, from the Committee on Natural Resources,  
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 2615]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 2615) to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, 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. 2615 is to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5699, in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, owns an approximately 3.3-acre lot adjacent to Gulf Islands National Seashore's Davis Bayou Area. The Post's property is essentially landlocked, with the only access via a one-lane dirt road across National Park Service (NPS) property. Under a previous informal agreement with the National Seashore, the NPS allowed the Post to construct and maintain the access road, but no right-of-way or special use permit was issued for it.

In 2015, the Post approached NPS with a proposal to exchange 2.16 acres of undeveloped land adjacent to the NPS land at the

south end of their property for 1.54 acres of NPS land that would connect the Post's property to the public road. The land exchange authorized by H.R. 2615 would formalize the existing land use, provide the Post with ownership and permanent access, and provide the Gulf Islands National Seashore undeveloped acreage adjacent to other undeveloped, NPS-owned lands.

In the 114th Congress, a similar bill, H.R. 4119, passed the House of Representatives by voice vote under suspension of the rules.

#### COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 2615 was introduced on May 23, 2017, by Congressman Steven M. Palazzo (R-MS). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Federal Lands. On July 25, 2017, the Natural Resources Committee met to consider the bill. No amendments were offered, and the bill was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent on July 26, 2017.

#### 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 and the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) and (3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and sections 308(a) and 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the enclosed cost estimate for the bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,  
*Washington, DC, September 8, 2017.*

Hon. ROB BISHOP,  
*Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 2615, the Gulf Islands National Seashore Land Exchange Act of 2017.

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

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

*H.R. 2615—Gulf Islands National Seashore Land Exchange Act of 2017*

H.R. 2615 would authorize the National Park Service (NPS) to exchange about 2 acres of land within the Gulf Islands National Seashore in Mississippi with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)

Post 5699. The exchange would provide the VFW with an access road.

If appraisals indicate that the value of the parcels to be exchanged are different, the bill would require that the party receiving the more valuable land provide a cash equalization payment or adjust the acreage of the land exchange. If the NPS were to acquire land of a higher value than the federal land exchanged, the NPS could make a cash payment to the VFW. Based on information provided by the NPS, CBO expects that the properties to be exchanged are of roughly equal value and that any such payment would not exceed \$500,000; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. The bill would require the VFW to cover all administrative costs associated with the land exchange.

Enacting H.R. 2615 could affect direct spending; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. Under the bill, if the NPS were to acquire land of a lower value than the federal land exchanged, the NPS could receive a cash payment to equalize the values; any such payments would be recorded as offsetting receipts, which are treated as reductions in direct spending. However, CBO estimates that any such payment would not exceed \$500,000. Enacting H.R. 2615 would not affect revenues.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 2615 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2028.

H.R. 2615 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA). The exchange authorized in the bill would have a small incidental effect on property taxes collected by local governments in Mississippi. That effect, however, would not result from an intergovernmental mandate as defined in the UMRA.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Janani Shankaran (for federal costs) and Jon Sperl (for intergovernmental mandates). The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

2. 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 exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

#### 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. This bill does not contain any directed rule makings.

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 to existing law.

