

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2201

To establish the Lower East Side Tenement National Historic Site, and  
for other purposes.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 17, 1997

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. LAZIO of New York, Mr. TOWNS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MOLINARI, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MANTON, Mr. KING, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. LaFALCE, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. BOEHLERT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

---

## A BILL

To establish the Lower East Side Tenement National  
Historic Site, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

### 3   **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Lower East Side Tene-  
5       ment National Historic Site Act of 1997”.

### 6   **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

7       (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

1           (1) immigration, and the resulting diversity of  
2           cultural influences, is a key factor in defining Amer-  
3           ican identity; the majority of United States citizens  
4           trace their ancestry to persons born in nations other  
5           than the United States;

6           (2) the latter part of the 19th century and the  
7           early part of the 20th century marked a period in  
8           which the volume of immigrants coming to the Unit-  
9           ed States far exceeded that of any time prior to or  
10          since that period;

11          (3) no single identifiable neighborhood in the  
12          United States absorbed a comparable number of im-  
13          migrants than the Lower East Side neighborhood of  
14          Manhattan in New York City;

15          (4) the Lower East Side Tenement at 97 Or-  
16          chard Street in New York City is an outstanding  
17          survivor of the vast number of humble buildings that  
18          housed immigrants to New York City during the  
19          greatest wave of immigration in American history;

20          (5) the Lower East Side Tenement is owned  
21          and operated as a museum by the Lower East Side  
22          Tenement Museum;

23          (6) the Lower East Side Tenement Museum is  
24          dedicated to interpreting immigrant life within a  
25          neighborhood long associated with the immigrant ex-

1 perience in the United States, New York's Lower  
2 East Side, and its importance to United States his-  
3 tory; and

4 (7) the National Park Service found the Lower  
5 East Side Tenement at 97 Orchard Street to be na-  
6 tionally significant; the Secretary of the Interior de-  
7 clared it a National Historic Landmark on April 19,  
8 1994, and the National Park Service through a spe-  
9 cial resource study found the Lower East Side Tene-  
10 ment suitable and feasible for inclusion in the Na-  
11 tional Park System.

12 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

13 (1) to ensure the preservation, maintenance,  
14 and interpretation of this site and to interpret at the  
15 site the themes of immigration, tenement life in the  
16 later half of the 19th century and the first half of  
17 the 20th century, the housing reform movement, and  
18 tenement architecture in the United States;

19 (2) to ensure continued interpretation of the  
20 nationally significant immigrant phenomenon associ-  
21 ated with New York City's Lower East Side and its  
22 role in the history of immigration to the United  
23 States; and

1           (3) to enhance the interpretation of the Castle  
2       Clinton, Ellis Island, and Statue of Liberty National  
3       Monuments.

4   **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

5       As used in this Act:

6           (1) HISTORIC SITE.—The term “historic site”  
7       means the Lower East Side Tenement at 97 Or-  
8       chard Street on Manhattan Island in New York  
9       City, New York, and designated as a national his-  
10      toric site by section 4.

11          (2) MUSEUM.—The term “Museum” means the  
12      Lower East Side Tenement Museum, a nonprofit or-  
13      ganization established in New York City, which owns  
14      and operates the tenement building at 97 Orchard  
15      Street and manages other properties in the vicinity  
16      of 97 Orchard Street as administrative and program  
17      support facilities for 97 Orchard Street.

18          (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
19      the Secretary of the Interior.

20   **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF HISTORIC SITE.**

21      (a) DESIGNATION.—To further the purposes of this  
22   Act and the Act entitled “An Act to provide for the preser-  
23   vation of historic American sites, buildings, objects, and  
24   antiquities of national significance, and for other pur-  
25   poses”, approved August 21, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 461 et

1 seq.), the Lower East Side Tenement at 97 Orchard  
2 Street, in the City of New York, State of New York, is  
3 designated a national historic site.

4 (b) STATUS AS AFFILIATED SITE.—The Lower East  
5 Side Tenement National Historic Site shall be an affiliated  
6 site of the National Park System. The Secretary shall co-  
7 ordinate the operation and interpretation of the historic  
8 site with that of the Lower East Side Tenement Historic  
9 Site and the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and Castle  
10 Clinton National Monument, as the historic site’s story  
11 and interpretation of the immigrant experience in the  
12 United States is directly related to the themes and pur-  
13 poses of these national Monuments.

14 (c) OWNERSHIP AND OPERATION.—The Lower East  
15 Side Tenement National Historic Site shall continue to be  
16 owned, operated, and managed by the Lower East Side  
17 Tenement Museum, a nonprofit institution.

18 **SEC. 5. MANAGEMENT OF THE SITE.**

19 (a) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—The Secretary is  
20 authorized to enter into a cooperative agreement with the  
21 Lower East Side Tenement Museum to ensure the mark-  
22 ing, interpretation, and preservation of the national his-  
23 toric site designated by this Act.

24 (b) ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary is authorized to  
25 provide technical and financial assistance to the Lower

1 East Side Tenement Museum to mark, interpret, and pre-  
2 serve the national historic site including the making of  
3 preservation-related capital improvements and repairs.

4 (c) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The Secretary shall, work-  
5 ing with the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, develop  
6 a general management plan for the historic site to define  
7 the National Park Service’s roles and responsibilities with  
8 regard to the interpretation and the preservation of the  
9 national historic site. The plan shall also outline how in-  
10 terpretation and programming for the Lower East Side  
11 Tenement National Historic Site and the Statue of Lib-  
12 erty, Ellis Island, and Castle Clinton national monuments  
13 will be integrated and coordinated so as to enhance the  
14 stories at each of the 4 sites. Such plan shall be completed  
15 within 2 years after the enactment of this Act.

16 (d) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this Act author-  
17 izes the Secretary to acquire the property at 97 Orchard  
18 Street or to assume overall financial responsibility for the  
19 operation, maintenance, or management of the Lower  
20 East Side Tenement National Historic Site.

21 **SEC. 6. APPROPRIATIONS.**

22 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums  
23 as are necessary to carry out this Act.

○