

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3074

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the site of the Battle of Camden in South Carolina, as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 10, 2003

Mr. SPRATT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Resources

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the site of the Battle of Camden in South Carolina, as a unit of the National Park System, 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. BATTLE OF CAMDEN SITE STUDY; REPORT.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Battle of Camden Study Act”.

6 (b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds as follows:

1 (1) The Battle of Camden, fought on August
2 16, 1780, was a significant defeat for the Americans
3 in the Revolutionary War.

4 (2) Camden was an essential point of control
5 for both armies in the Southern Campaign. The
6 British used Camden as a logistical base for the in-
7 vasion of North Carolina and as a key recruitment
8 and organizing point for Loyalists in South Caro-
9 lina. The Americans viewed Camden as the key to
10 retaking South Carolina.

11 (3) Major General Horatio Gates, commander
12 of the American Southern Command, led an army of
13 approximately 3,700 against Camden, which was de-
14 fended by British General Lord Charles Cornwallis
15 with an army of approximately 2,200.

16 (4) The Battle of Camden was one of the larg-
17 est field battles of the Revolution with both armies
18 using a combination of infantry, calvary, and artil-
19 lery units.

20 (5) Soldiers from 8 of what became the original
21 13 States participated in the battle (South Carolina,
22 Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Dela-
23 ware, New Jersey, and New York).

24 (6) 68 British soldiers and hundreds of Ameri-
25 cans died in the Battle of Camden with many of the

1 dead remaining in unmarked graves at the battle-
2 field site.

3 (7) The lessons learned by the Americans at the
4 Battle of Camden sowed the seeds for the eventual
5 American victory in the Revolutionary War 14
6 months later.

7 (8) In 1962, the site of the Battle of Camden
8 was designated as a National Historic Landmark.

9 (9) Development interests that are rapidly
10 changing the use of surrounding land from forestry
11 to residential and commercial use threaten the site
12 of the Battle of Camden.

13 (10) For several years, the National Park Serv-
14 ice has placed the Camden battlefield on the develop-
15 ment watch list and its 2003 strategic plan rec-
16 ommends that the status be changed to endangered.

17 (11) In 2002, the Palmetto Conservation Foun-
18 dation acquired and preserved 310 acres at the core
19 of the Battle of Camden.

20 (12) Historic Camden, an affiliated area of the
21 National Park System—

22 (A) is located approximately 6 miles from
23 the site of the Battle of Camden;

24 (B) was a colonial village founded in the
25 1730s;

1 (C) was occupied by Lord Cornwallis from
2 June 1780 to May 1781; and

3 (D) was one of the few frontier settlements
4 where two Revolutionary War battles were
5 fought.

6 (13) A March 2003 National Park Service re-
7 connaissance study concluded that further evaluation
8 of the Battle of Camden and Historic Camden as a
9 potential addition to the National Parks System was
10 warranted.

11 (c) STUDY; REPORT.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Inte-
13 rior (hereafter in this section referred to as the
14 “Secretary”) shall conduct a study of the site of the
15 Battle of Camden fought in South Carolina on Au-
16 gust 16, 1780, and the site of Historic Camden,
17 which is currently a National Park System Affiliated
18 Area. The study shall evaluate the national signifi-
19 cance of the sites and suitability and feasibility of
20 designating the sites as a unit or as separate units
21 of the National Park System.

22 (2) CRITERIA.—In conducting the study re-
23 quired by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall use the
24 criteria for the study of areas for potential inclusion

1 in the National Park System contained in section 8
2 of Public Law 91–383.

3 (3) CONTENTS.—The study required by para-
4 graph (1) shall—

5 (A) determine the suitability and feasibility
6 of designating the sites as a unit or as separate
7 units of the National Park System;

8 (B) include cost estimates for any nec-
9 essary acquisition, development, operation, and
10 maintenance of the sites; and

11 (C) identify alternatives for the manage-
12 ment, administration, and protection of the
13 area.

14 (4) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the
15 date funds are made available for the study, the Sec-
16 retary shall submit to the Committee on Resources
17 of the House of Representatives and the Committee
18 on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a
19 report on the findings, conclusions, and rec-
20 ommendations of the study.

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