

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 401

To provide for the designation of certain sites in Monroe County and Wayne County, Michigan, relating to the Battles of the River Raisin during the War of 1812 as a unit of the National Park System.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 9, 2009

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

A BILL

To provide for the designation of certain sites in Monroe County and Wayne County, Michigan, relating to the Battles of the River Raisin during the War of 1812 as a unit of the National Park System.

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 “River Raisin National
5 Battlefield Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The War of 1812, often referred to as
2 America's Second War of Independence, was a sig-
3 nificant event in the development of the United
4 States in that the war helped forge a national iden-
5 tity for the country, retained and solidified the
6 northern border with Canada, and finally settled any
7 question of the permanence of American sovereignty.

8 (2) In section 603 of division I of the Omnibus
9 Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996
10 (Public Law 104–333; 110 Stat. 4172), Congress
11 expressed its concern that “the historical integrity of
12 many Revolutionary War sites and War of 1812
13 sites is at risk”.

14 (3) The River Raisin Battlefield is the site of
15 a major engagement of the War of 1812, and the
16 battles and subsequent massacre at the River Raisin
17 were some of the most significant military events of
18 the entire war.

19 (4) Out of the nearly 1,000 American Regulars
20 and Militia who participated in the battle, only 33
21 escaped death or capture, including some 65 de-
22 fenseless prisoners who were killed or burned alive
23 the day after the second battle.

24 (5) The defeat of the Americans at Frenchtown,
25 now Monroe, Michigan, the subsequent massacre,

1 and the burning of the settlement was described by
 2 General William Henry Harrison as a “national ca-
 3 lamity”, and the outrage stemming from this catas-
 4 trophe aided recruitment efforts for the successful
 5 American campaign in the Spring of 1813.

6 (6) Soldiers passing through the ashes of
 7 Frenchtown the following summer on march to Can-
 8 ada were so moved by the tragic scene that they
 9 were spurred on to victory at the Battle of the
 10 Thames, where they shouted the emotional battle
 11 cry, “Remember the Raisin!”.

12 (7) The events at the River Raisin remain a
 13 significant moment in United States history and the
 14 battlefield where so many Americans paid the ulti-
 15 mate sacrifice for the defense of the United States
 16 deserves the highest degree of Federal protection
 17 and interpretation.

18 **SEC. 3. RIVER RAISIN NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK, MON-**

19 **ROE AND WAYNE COUNTIES, MICHIGAN.**

20 (a) ACQUISITION OF SITES RELATING TO BATTLES
 21 OF THE RIVER RAISIN.—If offered by Monroe County or
 22 Wayne County, Michigan, or other willing landowners in
 23 either County, the Secretary of the Interior shall accept
 24 on behalf of the United States the donation of real prop-

erty in either County relating to the Battles of the River Raisin on January 18 and 22, 1813, and their aftermath.

(b) DESIGNATION OF ACQUIRED PROPERTY AS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK.—Upon the acquisition of real property under subsection (a) of sufficient acreage to permit efficient administration, the Secretary shall designate the acquired real property as a unit of the National Park System to be known as the “River Raisin National Battlefield Park”.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report containing a description of the progress made in acquiring real property under subsection (a) and in designating the River Raisin National Battlefield Park.

