

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6130

To require priority visa processing for visitors to National Heritage Areas or National Parks, to invest in communities hosting these national treasures, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 13, 2012

Ms. HOCHUL introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To require priority visa processing for visitors to National Heritage Areas or National Parks, to invest in communities hosting these national treasures, 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 “National Treasure Pro-
5 motion and Investment Act of 2012”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The United States is blessed with natural
2 and historic treasures, including 58 National Parks
3 and 49 National Heritage Areas.

4 (2) The liberty, beauty, and history of the
5 United States draw visitors from every corner of the
6 world.

7 (3) Over 62 million international travelers vis-
8 ited the United States in 2011.

9 (4) The average overseas traveler spends ap-
10 proximately \$4,300 during his or her stay in the
11 United States.

12 (5) Wait times for travel visas can exceed 100
13 days and deter tourists from visiting the United
14 States, supporting its economy, and learning about
15 its culture and heritage.

16 (6) The Department of State collects visa
17 issuance fees from nonimmigrant visa applicants
18 from countries that levy excessive visa fees on
19 United States citizens.

20 (7) Visa issuance fees generated over \$28 mil-
21 lion in revenue in 2011 and are not required to
22 cover Department of State expenses.

23 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
24 gress that—

1 (1) the maintenance of infrastructure in com-
 2 munities hosting National Parks and National Her-
 3 itage Areas is important to the safety of residents
 4 and visitors to such communities; and

5 (2) visa issuance fees should be invested in the
 6 maintenance of such infrastructure in such commu-
 7 nities, which draw visitors from across the globe.

8 **SEC. 3. PRIORITIZATION OF CERTAIN VISAS.**

9 In issuing visas under section 101(a)(15)(B) of the
 10 Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
 11 1101(a)(15)(B)) to applicants seeking to visit the United
 12 States temporarily for pleasure, a consular officer (as de-
 13 fined in section 101(a)(9) of such Act (8 U.S.C.
 14 1101(a)(9))) shall give priority to applicants intending to
 15 visit a National Heritage Area or National Park.

16 **SEC. 4. TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IN COMMU-**
 17 **NITIES HOSTING NATIONAL TREASURES.**

18 (a) TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS.—
 19 The Secretary of Transportation shall make grants to sup-
 20 port infrastructure projects—

21 (1) in communities hosting National Heritage
 22 Areas or National Parks;

23 (2) that have been prioritized for completion by
 24 an applicable metropolitan planning organization (as

1 defined in section 134(b) of title 23, United States
2 Code); and

3 (3) that are determined beneficial to the upkeep
4 of roads or bridges utilized by international visitors
5 drawn to these regions.

6 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
7 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out subsection
8 (a) for a fiscal year the total amount of all nonimmigrant
9 visa issuance fees collected by the Secretary of State dur-
10 ing the prior fiscal year.

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