

112TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 2316

To designate the Salt Pond Visitor Center at the Cape Cod National Seashore as the “Thomas P. O’Neill, Jr. Salt Pond Visitor Center”, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 19, 2012

Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To designate the Salt Pond Visitor Center at the Cape Cod National Seashore as the “Thomas P. O’Neill, Jr. Salt Pond Visitor Center”, 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. DESIGNATION OF SALT POND VISITOR CENTER**

4 **AT THE CAPE COD NATIONAL SEASHORE.**

5 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

6 (1) Thomas Phillip (“Tip”) O’Neill, Jr. was
7 born on December 9, 1912, in a middle-class Irish
8 neighborhood of North Cambridge, Massachusetts,

1 to Thomas Phillip O’Neill, Sr. and Rose Ann
2 O’Neill;

3 (2) nicknamed “Tip” during his childhood, Tip
4 O’Neill was educated in Roman Catholic schools,
5 graduating from St. John’s High School in 1931,
6 where he was captain of the basketball team;

7 (3) Tip O’Neill attended Boston College, where
8 he ran for a Cambridge City Council seat during his
9 senior year, his first attempt at running for office
10 and only electoral defeat;

11 (4) following his graduation from Boston Col-
12 lege in 1936, Tip O’Neill was elected to the Massa-
13 chusetts House of Representatives that same year as
14 a New Deal Democrat whose political philosophy
15 was shaped by his experience growing up in working-
16 class Boston and his strong Catholic faith, which led
17 him to view government as a means for helping the
18 disadvantaged in society;

19 (5) in 1949, Tip O’Neill became the first
20 Democratic Speaker in the history of the Massachu-
21 setts State Legislature, serving as Speaker until
22 1952, when he ran successfully for the United States
23 House of Representatives to fill the seat vacated by
24 Senator-elect John F. Kennedy;

1 (6) in 1958, inspired by the establishment of
2 the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, a seashore
3 park in the State of North Carolina, Representative
4 Tip O’Neill, along with his close friend and colleague
5 Representative Edward Boland, introduced legisla-
6 tion to protect land on Cape Cod as a national sea-
7 shore;

8 (7) in describing the area on Cape Cod referred
9 to in paragraph (6), Henry David Thoreau wrote
10 that “[a] man may stand there and put all America
11 behind him”, as the pristine sandy beach, marshes,
12 ponds, and uplands supporting diverse species rep-
13 resent a unique, cherished jewel of nature;

14 (8) the legislation referred to in paragraph (6)
15 established a 40-mile National Park along the outer
16 beach of Cape Cod, from the city of Chatham
17 through the cities of Orleans, Eastham, Wellfleet,
18 Truro, and Provincetown, including lighthouses, cul-
19 tural landscapes, and wild cranberry bogs that offer
20 a glimpse of the past and continuing ways of life of
21 Cape Cod;

22 (9) after introducing the legislation referred to
23 in paragraph (6) in the 85th Congress, Tip O’Neill
24 continued to advocate strongly for the establishment
25 of the Cape Cod National Seashore, cosponsoring

1 bills in the 86th and 87th Congresses, testifying at
2 hearings, and working to advance the legislation
3 through Congress;

4 (10) the legislation to establish the Cape Cod
5 National Seashore was intended to preserve one of
6 the great natural marvels of the United States, in-
7 cluding the unbroken beach and moors, marshes,
8 forests, and freshwater ponds that are home to
9 many species of birds, fish, animals, and plants;

10 (11) on August 7, 1961, President Kennedy
11 signed into law Public Law 87–126, which author-
12 ized the establishment the Cape Cod National Sea-
13 shore;

14 (12) in 1966, the Cape Cod National Seashore
15 was formally established, and Representative O’Neill
16 attended the May 30, 1966, ceremony inaugurating
17 the Salt Pond Visitor Center;

18 (13) the Cape Cod National Seashore has be-
19 come a national treasure, with millions of Americans
20 and visitors from around the world enjoying the
21 beauty and remarkable biodiversity of the Cape Cod
22 National Seashore;

23 (14) Tip O’Neill and his family maintained a
24 home on Cape Cod in Harwich Port, and he was a

1 frequent visitor to the National Seashore throughout
2 his service in Congress and his retirement;

3 (15) while a Member of Congress, Tip O'Neill
4 rose quickly through the leadership ranks due to his
5 extraordinary political skills, mastery of the legisla-
6 tive process, and sharp wit, serving first as Majority
7 Whip in the House of Representatives beginning in
8 1971 and then, in 1973, as House Majority Leader;

9 (16) one of Tip O'Neill's greatest accomplish-
10 ments as Speaker was the crafting of a peace accord
11 between warring factions in Northern Ireland, dur-
12 ing which he worked with fellow Irish-American poli-
13 ticians, including Senator Edward M. Kennedy, to
14 develop the "St. Patrick's Day declaration", which
15 denounced violence in Northern Ireland and cul-
16 minated with the Irish aid package on the signing of
17 the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985;

18 (17) on January 3, 1987, Tip O'Neill retired
19 from Congress, having served in public life for 50
20 years, including 34 years as a Member of Congress
21 and 10 years as Speaker of the House, the longest
22 continuous term of any Speaker since the first Con-
23 gress met in 1789;

24 (18) Tip O'Neill's extraordinary record of pub-
25 lic service to the United States and tremendous ac-

1 accomplishments and unmatched attention to the
2 needs of his constituents led President George H.W.
3 Bush in 1991 to present Tip O’Neill with the Presi-
4 dential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award
5 in the United States; and

6 (19) it is fitting to recognize the support of Tip
7 O’Neill for the protection of the natural, historic,
8 and cultural resources of the National Parks of the
9 State of Massachusetts.

10 (b) DESIGNATION.—The Salt Pond Visitor Center at
11 Cape Cod National Seashore in Eastham, Massachusetts,
12 is designated as the “Thomas P. O’Neill, Jr. Salt Pond
13 Visitor Center”.

14 (c) REFERENCES.—Any reference to the Salt Pond
15 Visitor Center at Cape Cod National Seashore in any law,
16 regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the
17 United States shall be considered to be a reference to the
18 “Thomas P. O’Neill, Jr. Salt Pond Visitor Center”.

19 (d) SIGNAGE.—The Secretary of the Interior may
20 post an interpretive sign at the visitor center described
21 in this section that—

22 (1) includes information on Thomas P. O’Neill,
23 Jr. and his contributions as a Member of the United
24 States House of Representatives;

1 (2) includes an image of Thomas P. O'Neill,
2 Jr.; and

3 (3) refers to the efforts of Thomas P. O'Neill,
4 Jr. to aid in the preservation of the Cape Cod Na-
5 tional Seashore and other National Parks in the
6 State of Massachusetts.

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