



# Allegheny County Council

County of Allegheny  
436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Phone (412) 350-6490  
Fax (412) 350-6499

## Legislation Text

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Motion of the Council of Allegheny County encouraging Congress to create a reliable, predictable stream of resources to address deferred maintenance needs in America's national park system.

**WHEREAS**, on August 25, 1916, Congress established the National Park Service with the mission "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations;" and

**WHEREAS**, the people of the United States have inherited the remarkable legacy of the National Park System, which serves as a living testament to our citizens' valor, our nation's hardships, our victories, and our traditions as Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Park System preserves the diversity, culture, and heritage of all Americans, and serves as a living classroom for future generations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is home to fifteen national parks and twelve national heritage areas - including the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area, based in Homestead, Allegheny County, PA - as well as two national recreation areas and one regional office of the National Park Service; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2017, the National Park Service began its second century of stewardship of more than 400 nationally significant sites across the country, including majestic landscapes such as the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, hallowed battlefields and memorials such as Gettysburg National Military Park, Flight 93 National Memorial, Valley Forge National Historical Site and Fort Necessity National Battlefield; and iconic cultural and historical sites such as Independence National Historical Park, Steamtown National Historic Site, and the Johnstown Flood National Memorial; and

**WHEREAS**, as the National Park Service notes on its website, Allegheny County's own Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area is of profound local, national and global significance, insofar as it "...reveals how one region, in a sustained and thunderous blast of innovation, ambition and fire, forever changed America and its place in the world. It is the story of the industrialists and the workers who pushed an infant industry to its ultimate limits and in doing so pushed the world into the Age of Steel."; and

**WHEREAS**, communities adjacent to national parks benefit from tourism associated with visitors to these sites and the improved quality of place for residents; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2017, the National Park System had more than 331 million visits, including over 10 million in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2017, the National Park Service estimates that park visitors spent more than \$478 million at businesses in communities adjacent to national park sites throughout Pennsylvania, supporting an estimated 7,473 jobs and resulting in \$691 million in economic output in the state; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2018, the National Park Service estimated a deferred maintenance backlog of \$11.9 billion, including over \$314 million in national park units in Pennsylvania, which includes repairs to aging historical structures, trails, sewers, thousands of miles of roads, bridges, tunnels, and other vital infrastructure needs; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the responsibility of Congress to maintain America's national parks to ensure our natural places and our history is preserved and documented for future generations, and for the adjacent communities that rely on the direct and indirect economic benefits generated by visitors to national park sites.

**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS MOVED THAT THE COUNCIL OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY**

Does hereby urge Congress to create a reliable, predictable stream of resources to address deferred maintenance needs in America's National Park System, and to ensure that federal infrastructure initiatives include provisions to address park maintenance.

**IT IS FURTHER MOVED THAT**

A copy of this motion shall be transmitted to the Secretary of the United States Senate and the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Pennsylvania delegation to the United States Congress.