

**Statement for the Record  
U.S. Department of the Interior**

**House Natural Resources Committee  
Subcommittee on Federal Lands**

**Legislative Hearing on  
H.R. 3924, Wildfire Risk Evaluation Act  
H.R. 5095, HOMEFRONT Act of 2025  
H.R. 5419, Enhancing Administrative Reviews for Broadband Deployment Act  
H.R. 5729, North Rim Restoration Act of 2025  
H.R. 6365, Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act  
H.R. 6380, Chiricahua National Park Act  
H.R. \_\_\_\_, American Products in Parks Act**

December 11, 2025

Chairman Tiffany, Ranking Member Neguse, and members of the Subcommittee, the Department of the Interior (Department) is pleased to provide this statement for the record on the following legislation: H.R. 3924, Wildfire Risk Evaluation Act; H.R. 5095, HOMEFRONT Act of 2025; H.R. 5419, Enhancing Administrative Reviews for Broadband Deployment Act; H.R. 5729, North Rim Restoration Act of 2025; H.R. 6365, Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act; H.R. 6380, Chiricahua National Park Act; and H.R. \_\_\_\_, American Products in Parks Act.

**H.R. 3924, Wildfire Risk Evaluation Act**

H.R. 3924 directs the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to conduct a review of the wildfire environment in the United States every four years. This quadrennial review would institute a quantitative analysis of how changes to both built and natural environments have affected wildfire risk reduction, wildland fire management, and post-fire recovery efforts.

H.R. 3924 also requires a collaborative analysis of public health impacts related to wildfire with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The findings of these analyses would be compiled into a joint report to Congress. This report would outline anticipated wildfire-related challenges over the next two decades, highlight the most significant long-term wildland fire management issues, evaluate progress toward goals established in the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, and assess implementation of recommendations from the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission's 2023 report to Congress.

The Department welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with both the bill's sponsor and the committee to ensure its successful implementation. The Department and its bureaus already conduct comprehensive annual assessments—such as the Large Fire Review submitted to

Congress—and are proactively working toward a unification of Federal wildland fire programs under a U.S. Wildland Fire Service to streamline management efforts. Moreover, the Department’s Office of Planning and Performance Management, created by the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010, also conducts regular program evaluation to ensure Interior delivers critical services to the American public efficiently and effectively. The Department supports the goals of H.R. 3924 to further strengthen the Department’s strategic, long-term approach to effectively address our nation’s evolving wildfire challenges.

### **H.R. 5095, HOMEFRONT Act of 2025**

H.R. 5095 would exempt most existing military housing facilities from the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) while preserving core historic preservation safeguards. Facilities already listed in the National Register of Historic Places would remain subject to NHPA, and the Secretary of War would retain authority to identify and manage a limited share of additional housing units under NHPA where their historic value warrants continued protection. In our view, this targeted framework maintains meaningful protection for the most significant historic military housing resources while giving the Department of War important flexibility to address widespread modernization and quality-of-life needs within its housing portfolio.

The bill also prohibits the use of nondisclosure agreements that could discourage tenants from reporting unsafe or unhealthy conditions, while preserving their use in litigation settlements. We defer to the Department of War for its views regarding this provision.

The National Park Service (NPS) administers the National Register of Historic Places and plays a central role in implementing the NHPA. The Department recognizes both the importance of preserving nationally significant historic properties and the need to ensure that our Armed Forces can modernize and maintain safe, resilient housing for service members and their families. The Department does not object to H.R. 5095 and looks forward to working with the Committee and the Department of War on the implementation of H.R. 5095.

### **H.R. 5419, Enhancing Administrative Reviews for Broadband Deployment Act**

H.R. 5419 directs the Department and USDA to study their respective processes for reviewing requests for communications use authorizations to identify programmatic or administrative barriers to the timely review of requests for communications use authorizations; revisions to rules or regulations that could be implemented to improve efficiency with respect to reviewing requests for communications use authorizations; and processes for prioritizing the review of requests for communications use authorizations. It further directs that, within one year of enactment, the Secretaries jointly submit a report describing their findings and include a plan for providing the staffing necessary to ensure timely review of communications use authorizations.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) supports H.R. 5419 and notes that its current regulations for developing and operating broadband infrastructure on public lands include committing the agency to making a decision on communications uses ROWs, easements, or lease

applications within 270 days; providing consistency in the BLM's review of applications to locate communications facilities on Federal land; and allowing project applications to be submitted electronically. In addition, the BLM currently engages in several interagency working groups to support broadband and infrastructure and to streamline Federal permitting. Participants include the Department of Commerce, the USDA Forest Service, and other Federal agencies. These working groups have established processes to support and facilitate the expeditious review of communications projects. Moreover, the Permitting Council, which was established by Title 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41), includes the Department, the USDA, and other Federal agencies. The Permitting Council is charged with improving the transparency, predictability, and outcomes of the Federal environmental review and authorization process for certain large-scale critical infrastructure projects, including broadband. The BLM supports the bill's direction building on existing efforts to efficiently develop broadband infrastructure and recommends minor technical changes to remove the reference to BLM regional offices and to substitute "broadband land use authorizations" for "communications use authorizations" for technical clarity.

#### **H.R. 5729, North Rim Restoration Act of 2025**

The Department supports the goals of H.R. 5729 and appreciates the sponsor's commitment to ensuring that the NPS can respond swiftly and effectively to the impact of the Dragon Bravo Fire. Wildfire recovery at the Grand Canyon's North Rim requires an unusual level of coordination across damaged infrastructure, utilities, employee housing, and visitor facilities, and the bill reflects an important recognition of the urgency and complexity of this work.

The bill would provide clear congressional direction for the NPS to employ emergency acquisition flexibilities in response to the Dragon Bravo Fire. The Department recommends amending the bill to authorize the NPS to have full access to the elevated procurement thresholds in part 18 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation normally associated with disaster recovery operations, such as increased micro-purchase and simplified acquisition thresholds. This authority would enable the agency to move more efficiently on time-sensitive repair and reconstruction activities.

In addition, the Department recommends an amendment granting the NPS temporary, event-specific authority to enter into a noncompetitive procurement contract with the existing North Rim concessioner to carry out coordinated recovery work across both NPS-owned and concessioner-operated facilities. Because the concessioner is simultaneously repairing its own insured assets and has unique access, logistical capabilities, and operational responsibilities at the North Rim, a single integrated recovery contract would reduce duplication, accelerate project delivery, and ensure a unified approach. This authority would be time-limited and narrowly tailored to the Dragon Bravo Fire recovery effort. We look forward to working with the bill sponsor and the Committee on these amendments and ensuring the National Park Service has the tools needed to restore the North Rim as safely and efficiently as possible.

#### **H.R. 6365, Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act**

H.R. 6365 would direct the NPS to issue a right-of-way across a defined portion of Blue Ridge Parkway lands for the purpose of establishing an emergency egress route serving the Wintergreen community. The Department recognizes the public safety concerns this legislation seeks to address, particularly the need for reliable evacuation capacity in the event of wildfire or other emergencies in this heavily populated and geographically constrained area and therefore does not object to this legislation

The bill conditions the issuance of the right-of-way on the completion of key analyses, including the evaluation of non-Federal alternatives, the review of fire-behavior risks, and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act. These requirements are consistent with existing NPS authorities and ensure that the selected route minimizes impacts on Parkway resources, cultural landscapes, and visitor experience. The legislation establishes a mandatory path to approval once these conditions are satisfied, while preserving environmental and cultural review processes and ensuring that resource protection remains integral to decision-making.

If the Committee chooses to move forward with H.R. 6365, the Department would welcome the opportunity to work with the sponsor, the Committee, and the Wintergreen community to ensure smooth implementation aligned with ongoing Parkway planning efforts.

#### **H.R. 6380, Chiricahua National Park Act**

H.R. 6380 would redesignate Chiricahua National Monument in Arizona as Chiricahua National Park. The Department defers to Congress on H.R. 6380.

Chiricahua National Monument was established on April 18, 1924, by President Calvin Coolidge by presidential proclamation. The monument is located in Cochise County, approximately 37 miles southeast of Willcox, Arizona. It is located at the intersection of the Chihuahuan and Sonoran deserts, the southern Rocky Mountains, and the northern Sierra Madre.

Re-designating the monument as Chiricahua National Park is consistent with the nomenclature patterns of the National Park System. Units designated as national parks generally contain a variety of resources and encompass a large land or water area to help provide adequate protection of the resources. With its wealth of both natural and cultural resources over a large land mass of approximately 12,025 acres, it is appropriate to designate this unit as a national park.

Should Congress advance H.R. 6380, we recommend the bill be amended to align the bill text with standard NPS nomenclature. Because Chiricahua National Monument is already a unit of the National Park System, we suggest revising the bill's purpose clause to read: 'To redesignate the Chiricahua National Monument as Chiricahua National Park.'

#### **H.R. \_\_\_\_\_, American Products in Parks Act**

The discussion draft legislation would require all items sold in NPS gift shops and visitor centers to be produced in the United States, using a stringent "all or virtually all" sourcing standard. This

requirement incorporates language similar to the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) Made in USA Labeling Rule at 16 C.F.R. Part 323, which governs unqualified "Made in USA" claims by requiring that all or virtually all components and processing be of U.S. origin and that final assembly occur domestically. However, under the FTC's framework, manufacturers and advertisers bear responsibility for the accuracy of origin claims, while the FTC conducts investigations and enforcement actions. The discussion draft would shift responsibility for verifying and enforcing compliance to the Department through NPS and its concessioners. The NPS does not currently operate a regulatory compliance system of this scope with the necessary investigative tools, supply-chain visibility, or existing enforcement mechanisms, and implementing such a regime across more than 400 park units, thousands of retail products, and dozens of concession contracts would present significant administrative and operational challenges.

In addition, many concessioners, cooperating associations, and small businesses create certain high-demand product categories such as apparel, magnets, drinkware, textiles, and other souvenirs that may have limited or no commercially viable alternatives that are of U.S. origin, resulting in reduced product availability, higher costs for visitors, and potential impacts on revenue streams that support interpretive and educational programs. Without adequate flexibility, the legislation may unintentionally disadvantage small, community-based vendors who contribute to the unique cultural fabric of our parks.

For these reasons, the Department recommends that the Committee consider establishing a pilot program in a select group of parks before mandating systemwide implementation. Pilot sites could be selected based on the size and diversity of existing retail operations, demonstrated ability to integrate domestic sourcing practices, and high visitation levels capable of generating meaningful procurement and consumer response data. A pilot would also allow the Department to evaluate costs, supply-chain feasibility, administrative workload, vendor capacity, impacts on small businesses, and alignment with applicable FTC regulations. These findings would provide Congress with evidence needed to design a workable, scalable model that advances the bill's objectives while minimizing unintended consequences.

The Department appreciates the sponsor's interest in promoting American manufacturing and ensuring that products associated with our national parks reflect high-quality American craftsmanship. The Department shares the goal of strengthening domestic supply chains and recognizes the important role that national parks can play in highlighting American-made goods; however, we have concerns with the bill's implementation in its current form. In addition to these preliminary comments, we would welcome the opportunity to provide additional input after the bill is formally introduced.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a Statement for the Record on this legislation.