

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1927

To amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the African American Civil Rights Network, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 5, 2017

Mr. CLAY (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DELAURO, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GALLEGU, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. HOYER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. TURNER, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. SABLAN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. ROSS, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. EVANS, Mr. RASKIN, Mrs. DEMINGS, and Ms. LOFGREN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the African American Civil Rights Network, 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 “African American Civil
5 Rights Network Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

8 (1) the African American civil rights movement
9 includes historic events, court decisions, and legisla-
10 tion, the goals of which were—

11 (A) to end segregation based upon race;

12 (B) to end discrimination against African
13 Americans; and

14 (C) to ensure that African American citi-
15 zens could exercise their basic constitutional
16 rights, including the right to vote;

17 (2) the civil rights movement—

18 (A) helped bridge the divides of race, reli-
19 gion, sectional differences, and nationality;

20 (B) spanned State lines; and

21 (C) joined the ideals of liberty and freedom
22 expressed in the Declaration of Independence,
23 the Constitution, and the Civil Rights Act of
24 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000a et seq.) to the extraor-

1 dinary actions of ordinary men and women
2 working in common purpose for equal rights;

3 (3) the National Park Service and Organization
4 of American Historians conducted a theme study
5 that identified and interpreted sites related to the
6 Civil Rights movement (Public Law 106–113, Ap-
7 pendix C, “The National Park System New Area of
8 Study Act of 2000” [s. 1349]);

9 (4) in conducting the theme study referred to in
10 paragraph (3), the National Park Service and the
11 Organization of American Historians found that—

12 (A) although many sites relating to the Af-
13 rican American civil rights movement have been
14 identified and recognized in existing National
15 Park System units—

16 (i) a number of sites relating to the
17 African American civil rights movement
18 have not been recognized;

19 (ii) many sites relating to the African
20 American civil rights movement are in im-
21 minent danger of being lost or destroyed;
22 and

23 (iii) many important resource types
24 relating to the African American civil

1 rights movement are not adequately rep-
2 resented and protected;

3 (B) there are many important sites relat-
4 ing to the African American civil rights move-
5 ment that have high potential for preservation
6 and visitor use in a number of States, the Dis-
7 trict of Columbia, and territories of the United
8 States;

9 (C) no single site completely reflects and
10 characterizes the African American civil rights
11 movement, since the story of, and resources as-
12 sociated with, the African American civil rights
13 movement involve networks, regions, and terri-
14 tories of the United States rather than indi-
15 vidual sites; and

16 (D) the establishment of a variety of part-
17 nerships among the Federal Government, State,
18 and units of local government, and the private
19 sector would be most appropriate for the pro-
20 tection, restoration, and interpretation of the
21 African American Civil Rights Network;

22 (5) the National Park Service can play a vital
23 role in facilitating the creation and sustained success
24 of the African American Civil Rights Network; and

1 (6) the story and significance of the African
2 American civil rights movement can best engage the
3 people of the United States through a national pro-
4 gram of the National Park Service that links, in a
5 unified and flexible manner—

6 (A) historic buildings, structures, and sites
7 relating to the African American civil rights
8 movement;

9 (B) geographic areas relating to the Afri-
10 can American civil rights movement;

11 (C) interpretive centers, museums, and in-
12 stitutions relating to the African American civil
13 rights movement; and

14 (D) programs, activities, community
15 projects, exhibits, and multimedia materials re-
16 lating to the African American civil rights
17 movement.

18 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

19 (1) to recognize—

20 (A) the importance of the African Amer-
21 ican civil rights movement; and

22 (B) the sacrifices made by the people who
23 fought against discrimination and segregation;
24 and

1 (2) to authorize the National Park Service to
2 coordinate and facilitate Federal and non-Federal
3 activities to commemorate, honor, and interpret—

4 (A) the history of the African American
5 civil rights movement;

6 (B) the significance of the civil rights
7 movement as a crucial element in the evolution
8 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C.
9 2000a et seq.); and

10 (C) the relevance of the African American
11 civil rights movement in fostering the spirit of
12 social justice and national reconciliation.

13 **SEC. 3. U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS NETWORK PROGRAM.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subdivision 1 of Division B of
15 subtitle III of title 54, United States Code, is amended
16 by inserting after chapter 3083 the following:

17 **“CHAPTER 3084—U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS**
18 **NETWORK**

19 **“§ 308401. Definition of network**

20 “In this chapter, the term ‘Network’ means the Afri-
21 can American Civil Rights Network established under sec-
22 tion 308402(a).

1 **“§ 308402. U.S. Civil Rights Network**

2 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish,
3 within the Service, a program to be known as the ‘U.S.
4 Civil Rights Network’.

5 “(b) DUTIES OF SECRETARY.—In carrying out the
6 Network, the Secretary shall—

7 “(1) review studies and reports to complement
8 and not duplicate studies of the historical impor-
9 tance of the African American civil rights movement
10 that may be underway or completed, such as the
11 Civil Rights Framework Study;

12 “(2) produce and disseminate appropriate edu-
13 cational materials relating to the African American
14 civil rights movement, such as handbooks, maps, in-
15 terpretive guides, or electronic information;

16 “(3) enter into appropriate cooperative agree-
17 ments and memoranda of understanding to provide
18 technical assistance under subsection (c); and

19 “(4)(A) create and adopt an official, uniform
20 symbol or device for the Network; and

21 “(B) issue regulations for the use of the symbol
22 or device adopted under subparagraph (A).

23 “(c) ELEMENTS.—The Network shall encompass the
24 following elements:

25 “(1) All units and programs of the Service that
26 are determined by the Secretary to relate to the Af-

1 rican American civil rights movement during the pe-
2 riod from 1939 through 1968.

3 “(2) Other Federal, State, local, and privately
4 owned properties that—

5 “(A) relate to the African American civil
6 rights movement;

7 “(B) have a verifiable connection to the
8 African American civil rights movement; and

9 “(C) are included in, or determined by the
10 Secretary to be eligible for inclusion in, the Na-
11 tional Register of Historic Places.

12 “(3) Other governmental and nongovernmental
13 facilities and programs of an educational, research,
14 or interpretive nature that are directly related to the
15 African American civil rights movement.

16 **“§ 308403. Cooperative agreements and memoranda**
17 **of understanding**

18 “To achieve the purposes of this chapter and to en-
19 sure effective coordination of the Federal and non-Federal
20 elements of the Network described in section 308402(c)
21 with System units and programs of the Service, the Sec-
22 retary may enter into cooperative agreements and memo-
23 randa of understanding with, and provide technical assist-
24 ance to the heads of other Federal agencies, States, units

1 of local government, regional governmental bodies, and
2 private entities.”.

3 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters
4 for title 54, United States Code, is amended by inserting
5 after the item relating to chapter 3083 the following:

“3084. U.S. Civil Rights Network.”.

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