

Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial Enhancement Act of 2007.

NATIONAL PARKS
CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, July 19, 2007.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MILLER: On behalf of the 330,000 members of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), I am writing to express our strong support for your bill changing the designation by the Port Chicago Memorial from an affiliated NPS site to a full unit of the National Park System. This legislation brings the nation one step closer to fully honoring those whose service and sacrifice exacted such a heavy toll in blood and honor.

As you know, the Port Chicago Naval Magazine was the scene of a deadly explosion on July 17, 1944, which claimed the lives of 320 sailors and civilians and wounded 400 more. The blast, felt up to 500 miles away, occurred as merchant ships were being loaded with 5,000 tons of high explosives. Unaddressed concerns about safety led to a refusal by African American sailors assigned to an ordnance battalion to load or unload other ships. The subsequent court martial of 258 of these men on charges of bad conduct and mutiny was a highly controversial decision with decidedly racial overtones.

Establishing the Port Chicago Naval Magazine Memorial as a fully-fledged unit of the National Park System will complete work first started in 1990, when formal efforts to create a memorial first began. The explosion, work stoppage, and mutiny trial, provide invaluable insights into the injustice of racial discrimination, the African American

experience in the U.S. military, and home front life during the Second World War.

You are to be commended for the many years you have championed this cause and honored the legacy of the surviving veterans. This story deserves commemoration at the highest possible level and clearly is worthy of being fully vested in the care of the National Park Service, the guardians of our nation's natural and cultural heritage. We pledge to do all we can to help see your bill enacted into law.

Sincerely,

THOMAS C. KIERNAN,
President.

A TRIBUTE TO MR. HERBERT
WOODARD, SR.

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 19, 2007

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, on July 4, 2007, Mr. Herbert Woodard, Sr., a resident of my home community of Wilson, North Carolina will celebrate his 100th birthday. And on July 8th, Mr. Woodard's family, friends and members of the community will join together to pay special tribute to this extraordinary man.

I have had the privilege of knowing Mr. Woodard all of my life as a family friend and neighbor. A remarkable person with an entrepreneurial spirit, Mr. Woodard was born during a period in our history when significant educational opportunities were not available to Af-

frican-Americans. As a result, Mr. Woodard only received a fourth grade education. Notwithstanding this tremendous obstacle, Mr. Woodard's work ethic demonstrates that diligence and determination produce lifetime rewards. As a self-employed businessman, Mr. Woodard's businesses have ranged from that of a gas station to baseball parks and hotels. He sold and delivered coal to local businesses, and has even cleaned septic tanks. As an accomplished and humble businessman, he has gained the respect and admiration of his community.

Madam Speaker, although a skilled and savvy businessman, Mr. Woodard always makes a practice of giving back to the community. Each holiday season, Mr. Woodard gives turkeys to senior citizens at his church. He also donates to charitable organizations that provide services to children and veterans.

Mr. Woodard and his devoted wife of many years, Mrs. Georgia Battle Woodard have nurtured a strong and loving family. During a recent visit to the Woodard home, I asked Mr. Woodard to what does he attribute his longevity, and he said "I took care of my family." What a powerful statement in so few words.

Madam Speaker, It is with great pride that I acknowledge the achievements of Mr. Herbert Woodard, Sr. His many accomplishments have made him a well respected person in our community. It is with extreme pride that I ask my colleagues to rise and join me in marking this monumental occasion in the life of Mr. Herbert Woodard, Sr.