



H.R. 160 – Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Battlefield Protection Act

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 160 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Rush Holt (D-NJ) on January 4, 2007. The bill was reported, as amended, by voice vote on July 29, 2008.

H.R. 160 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 22, 2008.

SUMMARY

Grant Program: H.R. 160 establishes a battlefield acquisition grant program for nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The program will be administered by the Secretary of the Interior and provide grants to state and local governments for the preservation of eligible sites.

Reports: The bill requires the Secretary to submit a report to Congress on the activities carried out under the grant program within five years. It also requires the Secretary to update the report to Congress on the preservation activities carried out at the 677 battlefields and associated sites, changes in their condition, and other relevant developments to the battlefields and associated sites within three years of the date of enactment.

Authorization: The bill authorizes \$10 million for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the grant program. In addition, the bill authorizes \$500,000 for the update of the battlefield report.

BACKGROUND

The American Battlefield Act of 1996 established the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP), which promotes the protection, restoration, and awareness of historically significant American battlefields. The ABPP is administered by the National Park Service and requires matching funds from private donors. Eligibility for the program is currently limited to Civil War battlefields.

In 1996, Congress authorized a study to identify Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefields and related sites. In 2007, the National Park Service reported to Congress that they had documented 677 significant places associated with the two wars, which includes 243 battlefields and 434 associated historic properties in 31 states, the District of Columbia, and the United States Virgin Islands. The study also found that 170 of these historical sites are at risk of injury or destruction in the next decade.

COST

According to the Congressional Budget Office, "Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that the NPS would spend \$42 million over the 2009-2013 period (and \$8 million after 2013) to provide grants to state or local governments for land purchases. Enacting H.R. 160 would not affect revenues or direct spending." ([CBO Cost Estimate](#))

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

Representative Rob Bishop (R-UT) from the Additional Views of the Committee Report: "In earlier battlefield protection efforts, the National Park Service used their eminent domain powers to seize land from unwilling sellers and the justified resentment this caused hurt to subsequent efforts. Our



LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

HOUSE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE | CHAIRMAN ADAM PUTNAM

1420 LONGWORTH HOB, WASHINGTON, DC 20515

www.GOP.gov

PHONE 202.225.5107

FAX 202.226.0154

enthusiasm for battlefield protection not-with-standing, I hope that as we set to preserve historic sites, we emulate George Washington, not George the Third.”

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information contact Brianne Miller at 6-2302.