

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 15, 2018

Dear Colleague:

We invite you to join us in support of our national parks and cosponsor the bipartisan Restore Our Parks Act, S. 3172.

The National Park Service (NPS) manages more than 400 national park units--iconic landscapes, historic and cultural sites, trails, military battlegrounds, monuments, and memorials that received more than 331 million visitors last year. Our national parks preserve our heritage and American identity for generations to come. They also support a robust tourism economy. According to NPS, national park visitation generated \$18.2 billion for our local park gateway communities in 2017 and supported 306,000 jobs.

We are excited that visitation has increased at our parks, reaching record-breaking numbers in celebration of the National Park Service's centennial in 2016. However, with the increased strain on resources, aging facilities, and inconsistent funding, NPS has been unable to keep pace with park maintenance needs. Repairs to roads, bridges, water systems, visitor centers, trails, campgrounds, and historic structures have gone unaddressed for too long, and the Park Service estimates it would cost approximately \$11.6 billion to fully address the deferred maintenance backlog. The longer we wait, the more maintenance needs compound, creating additional problems and increasing the overall cost to solve this issue.

The Restore Our Parks Act, introduced by Senators Portman (R-OH), Warner (D-VA), Alexander (R-TN), and King (I-ME), would provide up to \$1.3 billion annually in dedicated federal funding to address national park deferred maintenance needs for the next five years. It would direct half of offshore and onshore oil, gas, coal, and other mineral operations, as well as renewables – that are not already allocated by law – to a fund that would be used to reduce the maintenance backlog. Other funds, such as LWCF, GOMESA and Reclamation Fund, which are similarly derived from federal energy revenues, would not be affected by this legislation. In total, an estimated \$6.5 billion could be invested into reducing the deferred maintenance backlog over five years – enough to fund the Park Service's highest priority needs and reduce the overall maintenance backlog by more than half.

By ensuring the maintenance of our national parks and public lands, this legislation would continue to preserve America's history and recreational opportunities, and protect local economies that depend on park tourism to flourish.

National parks are deeply loved and supported by Americans and international visitors alike. With your support, Congress can ensure these treasures will be around for future generations to visit and enjoy.

We respectfully ask you to join us and cosponsor the Restore Our Parks Act (S.3172). If you have questions or would like to cosponsor, please contact Sarah Pearce (Senator Portman) at sarah_pearce@portman.senate.gov, or Micah Barbour (Senator Warner) at micah_barbour@warner.senate.gov.

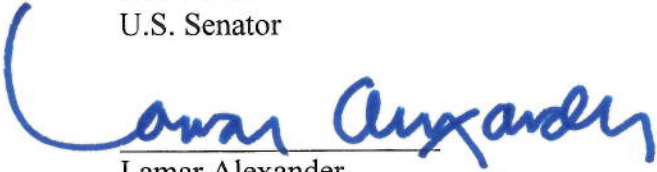
Sincerely,



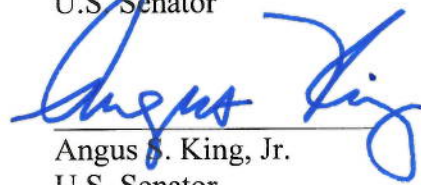
Rob Portman
U.S. Senator



Mark R. Warner
U.S. Senator



Lamar Alexander
U.S. Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
U.S. Senator