

S. 1705

A bill to authorize the Every Word We Utter Monument to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs

**STATEMENT OF P. DANIEL SMITH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, EXERCISING THE AUTHORITY OF THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS, CONCERNING S. 1705, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE EVERY WORD WE UTTER MONUMENT TO ESTABLISH A COMMEMORATIVE WORK IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND ITS ENVIRONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
June 19, 2019**

Chairman Daines, Ranking Member King, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to present the views of the Department of the Interior on S. 1705, a bill to authorize the Every Word We Utter Monument to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, and for other purposes.

Although the Department recognizes the value of having a monument to the women's suffrage movement in the Nation's capital, especially as we approach the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, we ask that the committee defer action on the bill until the organization that would be authorized to establish the memorial attains 501(c)(3) status under the Internal Revenue Code.

S. 1705 would authorize the organization named Every Word We Utter Monument to sponsor the establishment of a commemorative work that would honor the magnitude of the suffragists' 70-year effort to pass the 19th Amendment. The legislation suggests that the monument would depict specific design elements to include a sculptural portrait to honor suffragist leaders Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton with her daughter Harriot Stanton Blatch, Sojourner Truth, Alice Paul, and Ida B. Wells. The bill also identifies a preferred location of the monument as Area II – a geographic designation in the Commemorative Works Act (CWA), 40 U.S.C. Chapter 89 - near the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument and the Supreme Court. S. 1705 prohibits Federal funds from being used to establish the monument.

Although the monument description and location preference language are only included in the Findings section of the bill, they run counter to the spirit of the CWA. Congress

crafted the CWA to provide for a review framework and for an approval process to determine design and location of commemorative works. The CWA process is critical to maintaining integrity in placement and design of our Nation's monuments and memorials in the Nation's capital.

Also, the CWA includes in the definition of a "sponsor" of proposed commemorative work "an individual, group or organization that is described in section 501(c)(3)...". While the Every Word We Utter Monument organization is in the process of attaining this official status, it does not yet hold this designation. We believe it would be wise for the committee to wait until the Every Word We Utter Monument organization can meet the definition of sponsor under the CWA before acting on this legislation.

The National Park Service is proud to be the steward of monuments, memorials and sites throughout the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area that educate the public about women's history and commemorating the lives and accomplishments of women. The Clara Barton National Historic Site, located in Glen Echo, Maryland, interprets the life of Clara Barton, an American pioneer teacher, nurse, and humanitarian who was the founder of the American Red Cross. The Mary McLeod Bethune Council House and statue, both located in Washington, D.C., commemorate Ms. Bethune's dedication to education, the value of universal love, and the wise and consistent use of political power in striving for racial and gender equality. Other National Park Service sites in the National Capital Region commemorate important female leaders like Eleanor Roosevelt, Lady Bird Johnson, the dedicated women of the Armed Services, and the suffragists who led and won the fight for the 19th Amendment at the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument. A memorial to the 19th Amendment, if authorized in accordance with the CWA, would be a fitting addition to the places in the Nation's capital where women's achievements and contributions are honored.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.