

**STATEMENT OF P. DANIEL SMITH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, EXERCISING THE AUTHORITY OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, CONCERNING S. 1692, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES MEMORIAL FOUNDATION TO ESTABLISH A COMMEMORATIVE WORK IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND ITS ENVIRONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**February 14, 2018**

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Chairman Daines, Ranking Member King, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 1692, a bill to authorize the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, and for other purposes.

The Department supports S. 1692. The memorial authorized by this legislation would commemorate the commitment and service of the Emergency Medical Services profession. S. 1692 prohibits federal funds from being used to establish the memorial.

The Commemorative Works Act (CWA), 40 U.S. C. Chapter 89, precludes establishing a memorial to members of the Emergency Medical Services profession as a group because the memorialization of members of a group may not be authorized until after the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of the last surviving member. Therefore, our support for this proposal is based upon our understanding that this memorial will recognize the "commitment and service" of the Emergency Medical Services profession, not the organization's members.

A memorial to honor the commitment and service of a profession is not a concept that is explicitly described in the CWA, and it does not fit the typical mold for commemoration under the CWA. However, there is a precedent for this type of memorial: the National Peace Corps Memorial, which Congress authorized in 2014. That memorial was authorized not to commemorate Peace Corps participants explicitly, which would be inconsistent with the CWA, but rather to commemorate the "mission of the Peace Corps and the ideals on which the Peace Corps was founded."

At the September 14, 2015, meeting of the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission, the Commission reviewed H.R. 2274, a bill nearly identical to S. 1692. It was the consensus of the Commission that the language was clear that the memorial authorized by the bill would not commemorate individuals or a group of individuals, and therefore was not inconsistent with the CWA. We agree with the Commission's interpretation.

Finally, we note that S. 1692 provides that unspent funds raised for the construction of the memorial be provided to the National Park Foundation for deposit in an interest-bearing account as stated in 40 U.S.C. Section 8906(b)(3). This is a provision we strongly support including in all legislation authorizing memorials under the CWA.

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