

February 15, 2007

Dear Members of Congress:

As the nation prepares for the centennial of the establishment of our National Park System, we must renew support throughout our country for our national parks, the superlative natural and cultural symbols of our shared American experience.

Fifty years ago, President Eisenhower launched Mission 66, a ten-year, \$1 billion dollar program approved by Congress that upgraded park facilities, staffing and resource management capabilities throughout the park system to commemorate its fiftieth anniversary in 1966. We are now calling on Congress to make a proportional investment as we approach the 100th anniversary of the National Park System.

To revitalize the park system by its centennial and prepare it for the next 100 years, citizens and policy makers must take action today.

Accordingly, we urge Members of Congress and the President to engage in a sustained effort between now and the centennial of the National Park System and the National Park Service in 2016 to provide the resources necessary to protect our national inheritance and to ensure that our society receives the full benefit of our national parks for generations to come. This endeavor should:

- Restore the health of the cultural and natural resources of our national parks by taking action to overcome external and internal threats.
- Reinvest in our national parks by establishing reliable sources of sustainable public funding and strategic private investments.
- Ensure that the National Park System continues to thrive and evolve to represent nationally significant landscapes and the full range and diversity of American history and culture.
- Ensure that parks have current science and active research to inform decisions about park protection, as these decisions should be based on science and informed expertise to the greatest extent possible.
- Reinvigorate the professionalism and efficiency within the National Park Service by facilitating mission-driven decision making, encouraging innovation and stimulating stakeholder collaboration.

From such icons of democracy as the Statue of Liberty, the National Mall, the home of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the battlefields of Little Bighorn and Gettysburg to the natural and cultural wonders of the Grand Canyon, Mesa Verde, Yellowstone and Yosemite, the sites managed by the Park Service capture the full diversity of the American experience. Together we can work toward protecting these world-renowned treasures so that our national parks can continue to inspire and welcome visitors for generations to come. Of all the things the federal government is responsible for overseeing, the National Park system represents one of the best investments the federal government can make in our future.

Our national parks-- from spectacular natural cathedrals to bucolic homesteads of great Americans to the hallowed ground of Civil War battlefields--should be honored, cherished and nurtured. For the centennial of the National Park System we should invest, restore and reinvigorate our parks and parklands for all citizens. The national parks present an opportunity for our national leaders to work together to forge a long-term bipartisan solution that protects the "best idea" America ever had. We urge you to help restore the full glory of these great places.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Carlos Alvarez, Mayor, Miami-Dade County  
The Honorable Rocky Anderson, Mayor, Salt Lake City  
The Honorable Cecil Andrus, former Secretary of the Interior and Governor, Idaho  
The Honorable Bruce Babbitt, former Secretary of the Interior and Governor, Arizona  
The Honorable Howard H. Baker, Jr., former United States Senate Majority Leader and former  
United States Ambassador to Japan  
The Honorable John Baldacci, Governor, Maine  
David Baldacci, Author  
Nevada Barr, Award-winning Author  
Michael Berman, The Duberstein Group  
The Honorable James Blanchard, Ambassador to Canada, former Governor, Michigan and  
Congressman, Michigan  
The Honorable Michael Bloomberg, Mayor, New York City  
Julian Bond, Chairman, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
The Honorable Phil Bredesen, Governor, Tennessee  
Lester Brown, Founder and President, Earth Policy Institute  
Curt Buchholtz, Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Nature Association  
The Honorable Dale Bumpers, former Senator, Arkansas and Chair, Senate Subcommittee on  
National Parks and Public Lands  
Ken Burns, Filmmaker  
The Honorable Jimmy Carter, former President of the United States  
Rt. Reverend John Bryson Chane, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Washington, DC  
Richard Cizik, Vice-President for Governmental Affairs, National Association of Evangelicals  
General Wesley Clark, Retired  
Walter Cronkite  
Frederick Douglass, IV, President and Founder, Frederick Douglass Organization, Inc.  
Roger Dow, President and Chief Executive Officer, Travel Industry Association of America  
Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Actor  
The Honorable Kenneth Duberstein, former Chief of Staff to President Ronald Reagan  
Dayton Duncan, Author and documentary Filmmaker  
The Honorable Jennifer Dunn, former Congresswoman, Washington  
Gary Everhardt, former Director, National Park Service  
Richard D. Fain, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Royal Caribbean Cruiselines, Ltd.  
Michael V. Finley, President, Turner Foundation, Inc.  
Eric Foner, DeWitt Clinton Professor of History at Columbia University  
The Honorable Shirley Franklin, Mayor, Atlanta  
Gerard T. Gabrys, President and Chief Executive Officer, Guest Services Inc.  
John Gage, President, American Federation of Government Employees  
John Gans, President and Executive Director, National Outdoor Leadership School  
Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University Professor, Harvard University  
Bobby Ginn, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Ginn Company  
Reverend Joan Gray, Moderator, Presbyterian Church (USA)  
David Hales, President, College of the Atlantic  
Bob Hansen, President, The Yosemite Fund  
George B. Hartzog, Jr., former Director, National Park Service  
Alan Horn, President and Chief Operating Officer, Warner Brothers  
Frank Hugelmeyer, President and Chief Executive Officer, Outdoor Industry Association  
Lee Iacocca, Founding Chairman, The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc.  
Peter Illyn, Executive Director, Restoring Eden- Christians for Environmental Stewardship  
Sally Jewell, President and Chief Executive Officer, Recreational Equipment, Inc.  
Lady Bird Johnson, former First Lady of the United States

The Honorable J. Bennett Johnston, former Senator, Louisiana and Former Chair, Senate  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
Paul Tudor Jones II, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Tudor Investment Corp.  
Henry Jordan, former Chair, National Trust for Historic Preservation  
The Honorable Nancy Landon Kassebaum, former Senator, Kansas  
Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
Roger G. Kennedy, Director Emeritus, National Museum of American History, former Director,  
National Park Service  
Gary Kiedaisch, President and Chief Executive Officer, Coleman Company  
Stein Kruse, President and Chief Executive Officer, Holland America Line  
Alan Lacy, former Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Sears Holdings Corporation  
Ambassador L.W. "Bill" Lane, Publisher (*Ret.*) of *Sunset Magazine*  
Norman Lear, Writer, Producer  
Jim Lighthizer, President, Civil War Preservation Trust  
Barry Lopez, Author  
Thomas D. Mangelsen, Photographer, International League of Conservation Photographers  
Fellow, Co-Founder, The Cougar Fund  
Alice Mathews, President, Garden Club of America  
Peter Matthiessen, Author  
David McCullough, Author and Historian  
Bill McKibben, Author  
James M. McPherson, Author and Historian  
Stephen Mather McPherson, former Chair, NPCA Board of Trustees  
Charles Merin, President, Travel Business Roundtable  
The Honorable Robert H. Michel, former Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives  
Richard Moe, President, National Trust for Historic Preservation  
The Honorable Walter Mondale, former Vice President and Senator from Minnesota  
William Least Heat Moon, Author  
Greg Moore, Executive Director, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy  
David Muench, Photographer  
Glenn Padnick, President, Castlerock TV  
The Honorable John Edward Porter, former Congressman, Illinois  
Roxanne Quimby, Executive Director, Eliotville Plantation, Inc.  
Robert Redford  
The Honorable Nathaniel Reed, former Assistant Secretary of the Interior  
Robert B. Reich, Professor, University of California at Berkeley, former U.S. Secretary of Labor  
The Honorable William K. Reilly, President and Chief Executive Officer, Aqua International  
Partners, former Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency  
The Honorable Bill Richardson, Governor, New Mexico  
Marie Ridder, Board Member, Trust for Public Land  
James M. Ridenour, former Director, National Park Service  
The Honorable Chuck Robb, former Senator, Virginia and former Governor, Virginia  
David Rockefeller, Jr.  
The Honorable Paul G. Rogers, former Congressman, Florida  
Theodore Roosevelt, IV, NPCA Council Member  
The Honorable Brian Schweitzer, Governor, Montana  
Tom Secunda, Founding Partner, Bloomberg LLP  
Theodore Sedgwick, Chairman of the Board, Civil War Preservation Trust  
Jerry Seinfeld, Actor  
Bobby Shriver, Commissioner, California State Park Recreation Commission  
Tom Skerritt, Actor, Writer and American Rivers Board Member  
Gus Speth, Dean, Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies

Bob Stanton, former Director, National Park Service  
Gene Sykes, Managing Director, Goldman, Sachs and Company and Chairman, NPCA Board  
of Trustees  
Lee Talbot, Professor, George Mason University, former Director-General, International Union  
for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, IUCN-Switzerland  
The Honorable Lowell Thomas, Jr., former Lieutenant Governor, Alaska, and Mountain Pilot  
Andy Todd, President and Chief Executive Officer, Xanterra Parks and Resorts  
Ted Turner, Philanthropist  
The Honorable Stewart Udall, former Secretary of the Interior  
The Honorable Fran Ulmer, former Lieutenant Governor of Alaska  
Bill Wade, Chair, Executive Council, Coalition of National Park Service Retirees  
The Honorable Olene Walker, former Governor, Utah  
The Honorable Mark Warner, former Governor, Virginia  
Peter Wege, NPCA Council Member  
Anne Wexler, Chairman of the Executive Committee of Wexler and Walker Public Associates  
Doug Wheeler, Chair, National Park System Advisory Board  
The Honorable Christine Todd Whitman, former Administrator, Environmental Protection  
Agency  
James Whitmore, Actor  
Terry Tempest Williams, Author  
Edward O. Wilson, University Research Professor Emeritus and Honorary Curator in  
Entomology, Harvard University  
Mrs. William B. (Ann) Ziff, Ziff Brothers Investments