

107TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 2388

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to study certain sites in the historic district of Beaufort, South Carolina, relating to the Reconstruction Era.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 29, 2002

Mr. HOLLINGS introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to study certain sites in the historic district of Beaufort, South Carolina, relating to the Reconstruction Era.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Reconstruc-
5 tion Study Area Act of 2002”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) the Reconstruction Era, during which Con-
9 gress adopted the 13th amendment ending slavery,
10 the 14th amendment guaranteeing civil rights, and

1 the 15th amendment guaranteeing voting rights to
2 all citizens of the United States, saw the occurrence
3 of a transforming series of events in the history of
4 the United States;

5 (2) Beaufort, South Carolina, and the sur-
6 rounding sea islands—

7 (A) contain significant historical and ar-
8 chaeological sites associated with the Recon-
9 struction Era; and

10 (B) offer a unique opportunity for pre-
11 serving and interpreting the Reconstruction
12 Era;

13 (3) the first African-Americans to hear the
14 reading of Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Procla-
15 mation assembled on January 1, 1863, at the Old
16 Fort Plantation on the Beaufort River in the State
17 of South Carolina;

18 (4) the Penn School, a national historic land-
19 mark located on St. Helena Island, South
20 Carolina—

21 (A) was the first educational experiment of
22 the Reconstruction Era and the eventual end of
23 chattel slavery; and

1 (B) remains 1 of the most significant Afri-
2 can-American cultural and educational institu-
3 tions in the United States;

4 (5) the Freedmen’s Bureau, located in the re-
5 stored Beaufort College, served as the chief policy
6 arm of the Federal Government for matters related
7 to emancipated slaves during the Reconstruction
8 Era;

9 (6) Beaufort County, South Carolina, and the
10 surrounding sea islands have many other noteworthy
11 historic buildings and archaeological sites,
12 including—

13 (A) buildings and sites associated with
14 Robert Smalls, a former slave who—

15 (i) became a hero to the Union cause
16 when he and several slaves seized control
17 of the armed Confederate ship on which
18 they served and then turned the ship over
19 to the Union navy; and

20 (ii) represented the State of South
21 Carolina in the House of Representatives
22 during the Reconstruction Era;

23 (B) the first Freedmen’s Village of
24 Mitchellville on Hilton Head Island, South
25 Carolina;

1 (C) Camp Sexton, the site of the first Afri-
2 can-American regiment mustered in the United
3 States Army; and

4 (D) Penn School and Beaufort College;

5 (7) the National Park System does not have a
6 park or historic site that focuses primarily on the
7 preservation and interpretation of the Reconstruc-
8 tion Era; and

9 (8) the Reconstruction Era was a period of
10 deep cultural, political, and economic division in the
11 United States, and it is necessary to better under-
12 stand this complex period of history and the con-
13 tinuing impact of this period on the United States.

14 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

15 In this Act:

16 (1) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
17 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
18 rector of the National Park Service.

19 (2) STUDY AREA.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “study area”
21 means the area comprised of historical sites in
22 the historic district of Beaufort, South Caro-
23 lina, relating to the Reconstruction Era.

24 (B) INCLUSIONS.—The term “study area”
25 includes—

- 1 (i) the Penn School;
- 2 (ii) the Old Fort Plantation on the
3 Beaufort River;
- 4 (iii) the Freedmen's Bureau in Beau-
5 fort College;
- 6 (iv) the First Freedmen's Village of
7 Mitchellville on Hilton Head Island;
- 8 (v) various historic buildings and ar-
9 chaeological sites associated with Robert
10 Smalls;
- 11 (vi) the Beaufort Arsenal; and
- 12 (vii) other significant sites relating to
13 the Reconstruction Era.

14 **SEC. 4. STUDY.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the
16 date on which funds are made available to carry out this
17 Act, the Secretary shall complete a study of the study area
18 to assess the suitability and feasibility of designating the
19 study area as a unit of the National Park System.

20 (b) APPLICABLE LAW.—The study required under
21 subsection (a) shall be conducted in accordance with Pub-
22 lic Law 91–383 (16 U.S.C. 1a–1 et seq.).

23 **SEC. 5. REPORT.**

24 Not later than 2 years after the date on which the
25 study under section 4(a) is completed, the Secretary shall

1 submit to the Committee on Resources of the House of
2 Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Nat-
3 ural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

4 (1) the findings of the study; and

5 (2) any conclusions and recommendations of the
6 Secretary.

7 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

8 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums
9 as are necessary to carry out this Act.

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