

THE FALL RIVER VISITOR CENTER ACT OF 1995

JULY 28, 1995.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of
the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, from the Committee on Resources,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 629]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 629) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the operation of certain visitor facilities associated with, but outside the boundaries of, Rocky Mountain National Park in the State of Colorado, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 629 is to permit the National Park Service at Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado to enter into a cooperative agreement for the operation of a joint public/private visitor center outside the park.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Rocky Mountain National Park is the number one tourist attraction in the State of Colorado, with an annual visitation of almost three million people. Nearly one million visitors enter the park via the Fall River entrance each year. Use of this entrance has greatly increased due to changing traffic patterns in the town of Estes Park located adjacent to the park. However, virtually no developed facilities exist to serve the visitors at this entrance. As a result, many visitors travel the entire distance through the park without the benefit of basic information regarding the park and its resources.

The need for a visitor center was recognized in the 1988 Fall River Entrance Development Concept Plan. Due to budget constraints, little progress has been made towards a visitor center. Recently, the H.W. Stewart Corporation offered to build and maintain a visitor center on private property located just outside the Fall River entrance. In conjunction with the visitor center building, commercial buildings and uses would also be developed on the site. National Park Service (NPS) staff has completed a Conceptual Planning Document for the project to aid in future planning on behalf of the Park Service. A building of approximately 5,000 square feet has been identified as appropriate.

H.R. 629 would allow a partnership to be formed between the National Park Service, the Shirley S. Scrogin Charitable Trust, H.W. Stewart, Inc. and the Rocky Mountain National Park Associates. The Scrogin Trust will provide \$1.25 million toward construction and an endowment for continued maintenance and operation of the visitor center. H.W. Stewart, Inc. will provide the property and will operate a restaurant, gift shop, lodge, and stable on its adjacent lands. The Rocky Mountain National Park Associates is a non-profit group which has raised \$65,000 toward the furnishing and educational exhibits which are estimated to cost \$275,000. Annual operating costs of the visitor center are estimated to be \$100,000. The Scrogin Trust has pledged approximately \$30,000 per year with the balance to be funded from NPS's operational budget.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 629 was introduced on January 26, 1995, by Representative Wayne Allard (R-CO). The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Lands. On May 18, 1995, the Subcommittee held a hearing on H.R. 629, where the Administration testified in support of the bill. On June 27, 1995, the Subcommittee met to mark up H.R. 629. The bill was then ordered favorably reported to the Full Committee without amendment. On July 12, 1995, the Full Resources Committee met to consider H.R. 629. The bill was ordered favorably reported without amendment to the House of Representatives, in the presence of a quorum.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1 states that the bill may be cited as "The Fall River Visitor Center Act of 1995".

Section 2 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to expend funds for the operation and maintenance of a visitor center on private lands outside the boundary of Rocky Mountain National Park and defines the land where such visitor center is to be built. Absent specific congressional authority, NPS would not be authorized to spend funds for these purposes on non-Federal lands. The Committee finds that the type of partnership proposed under the legislation is beneficial to the government from a cost reduction standpoint.

In carry out H.R. 629, the Committee expects the Secretary of the Interior to ensure that non-Federal activities occurring in the immediate vicinity of the Fall River Visitor Center are not accorded

any preferential endorsement, advertisement or promotion by the NPS.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With respect to the requirements of clause 2(l)(3) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, and clause 2(b)(1) of Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

INFLATIONARY IMPACT STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 2(l)(4) of the rule XI of the rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee estimates that the enactment of H.R. 629 will have no significant inflationary impact on prices and costs in the operation of the national economy.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XI

1. With respect to the requirement of clause 2(l)(3)(B) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, H.R. 629 does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues to tax expenditures.

2. With respect to the requirement of clause 2(l)(3)(D) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee has received no report of oversight findings and recommendations from the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight and the subject of H.R. 629.

3. With respect to the requirement of clause 2(l)(3)(C) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following costs estimate for H.R. 629 from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, July 13, 1995.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
*Chairman, Committee on Resources,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has reviewed H.R. 629, the Fall River Visitor Center Act of 1995, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on July 12, 1995. Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that implementing this bill would cost the federal government about \$70,000 a year. Enacting H.R. 629 would affect direct spending; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply.

H.R. 629 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to operate and maintain a privately constructed and owned visitor center outside of Rocky Mountain National Park. For this purpose, the bill would authorize the Secretary to accept and spend private contributions and to spend appropriated funds. Based on information provided by the National Park Service, CBO estimates that it

would cost the agency about \$100,000 per year to operate the center once it is constructed. About \$70,000 of this amount would require appropriation; the balance would be donated by private organizations. Because the \$30,000 of new annual receipts from contributions would be available for obligation without appropriations action, there would be no net impact on direct spending.

H.R. 629 would not affect the budgets of state or local governments.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis.

Sincerely,

JUNE E. O'NEILL, *Director.*

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, H.R. 629 would make no changes in existing law.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

The Committee has received no departmental reports on H.R. 629.

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