

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 2, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary
Department of the Interior
1849 C St NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke,

We write with great concern regarding the Department of Interior's proposed plan to drastically increase entrance fees to 17 of our nation's most popular national parks, including the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Yosemite, and more.

The agency's proposal to increase per-vehicle and per-visitor entrance fees during peak season is misguided and will have a tremendously negative impact for both working families and the local economies that these parks support.

In 2016, there were a record 331 million visits to national parks across the country, and our local economies saw significant economic benefits. Last year, visitors spent as much as 18.4 billion dollars in gateway regions, communities within 60 miles of a national park. In these regions, this spending led to 318,000 jobs and 12 billion dollars in labor income. This is a significant increase above tourist spending merely three years ago and represents a bright spot for rural economies. We cannot support the raising of entrance fees that may have the unintended consequence of slowing the economy and limiting access to our shared public lands.

Nearly doubling or tripling entrance fees, as is currently proposed, would severely curtail the number of American families who are able to afford to visit the parks that belong to them. Under the proposed fee structure, low-income families would essentially be priced out from our most cherished public lands, contradicting the very reason the parks were established. Public lands belong to all Americans, not just wealthy families who can absorb the steep fee increases.

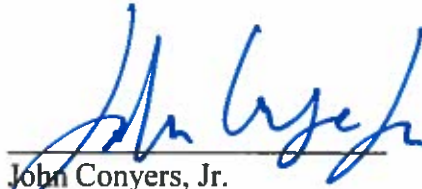
At a time of record visits to national parks across the nation, the Administration should be working with Congress to allocate sufficient funding to tackle the maintenance backlog, not shifting those costs to visitors or cutting critical NPS resources and staffing, as has been proposed in the Administration's budget.

We urge you not to adopt the proposed fee hikes, and instead to work with Congress to ensure national parks are appropriated the funds and resources they need to support current visitors and generations of visitors to come.

Sincerely,



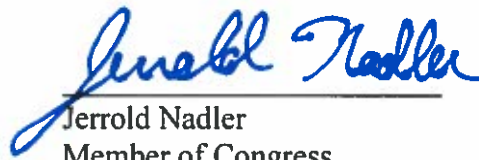
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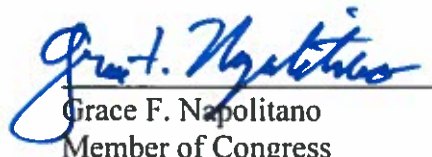
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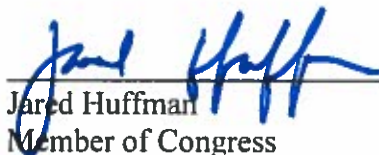
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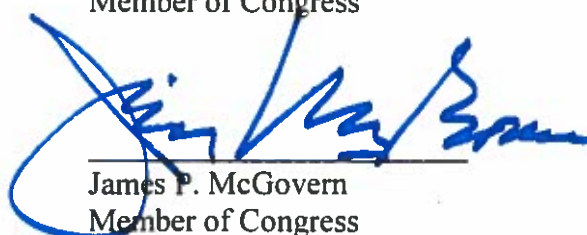
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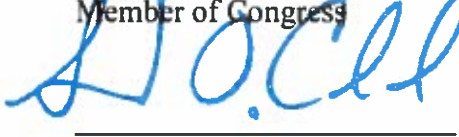
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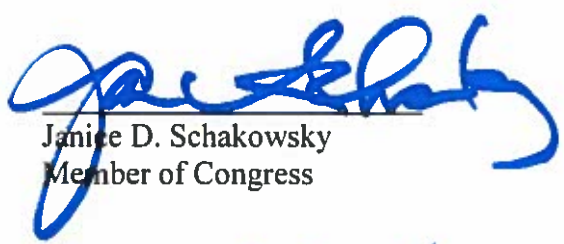
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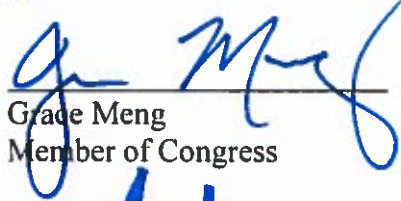
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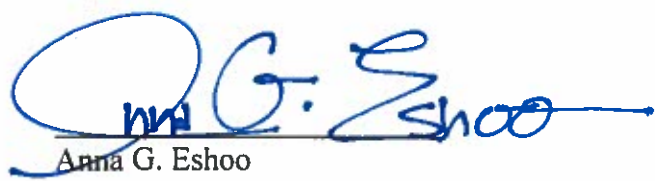
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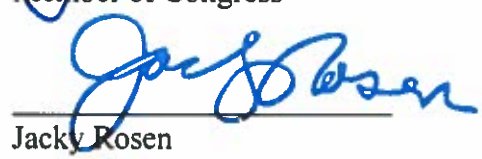
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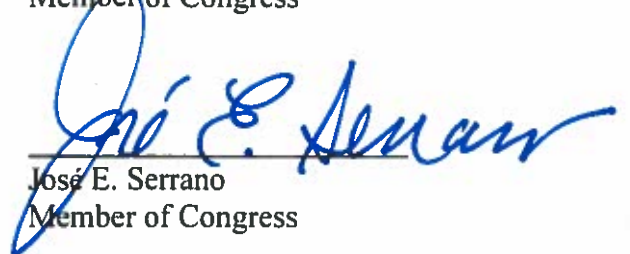
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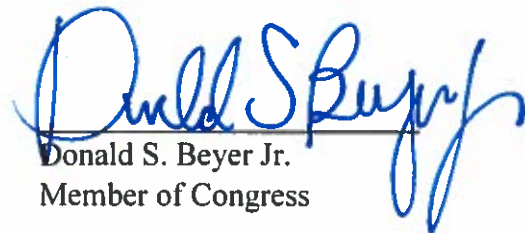
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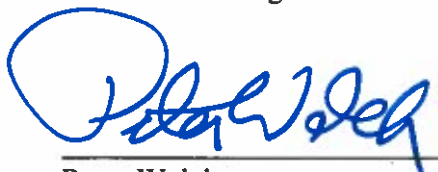
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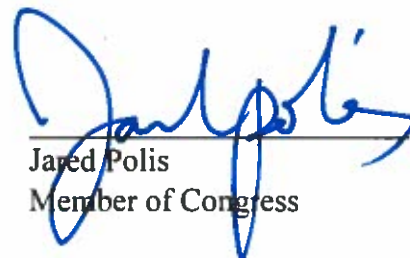
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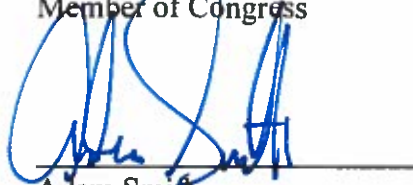

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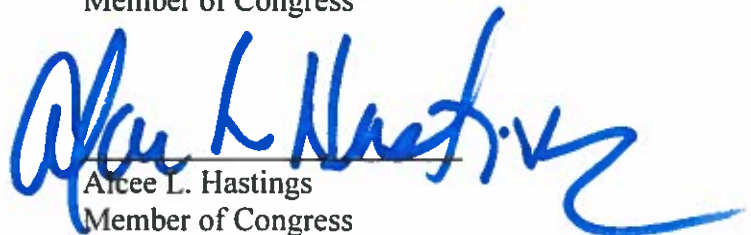

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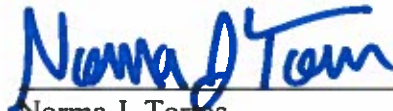
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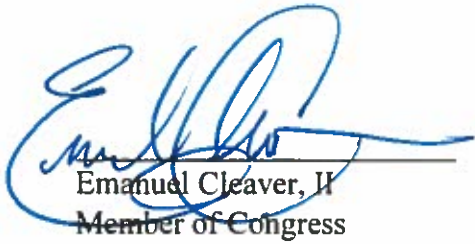
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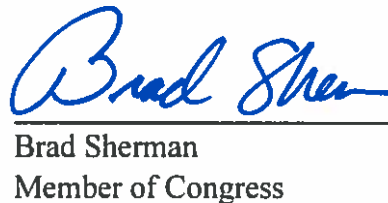

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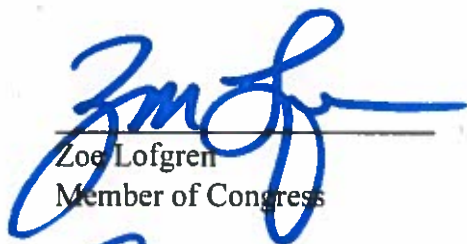

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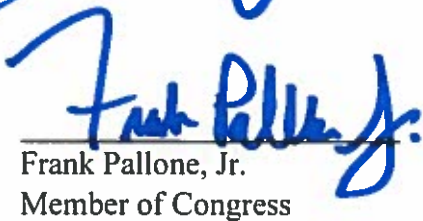

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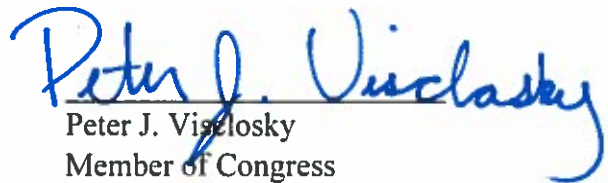
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