

TO AUTHORIZE THE THOMAS PAINE MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION TO ESTABLISH A COMMEMORATIVE WORK IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AND ITS ENVIRONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

DECEMBER 30, 2022.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. GRIJALVA, from the Committee on Natural Resources, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 6720]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 6720) to authorize the Thomas Paine Memorial Association to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 6720 is to authorize the Thomas Paine Memorial Association to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

H.R. 6720 authorizes the Thomas Paine Memorial Association to establish a commemorative work on federal land in the District of Columbia in honor of the philosopher and patriot, Thomas Paine.

Thomas Paine was a luminary patriot of the Enlightenment and the American Revolution who inspired people in the colonies not only to overthrow the tyranny of faraway kings but to launch a nation founded on principles of democratic self-government, the rights of men and women, and reason and science. Despite his catalytic role in founding America and our constitutional republic, Paine remains largely neglected in historical narratives. This memorial to Paine has already been pre-funded with a flood of voluntary contributions and pledges from private citizens. Almost uniquely among the Founding Fathers, Paine opposed slavery and favored abolition, called for a progressive income tax to pay for universal education (including for both men and women), a welfare system for poor relief, pensions, women's rights, and more.

Thomas Paine was one the greatest political writers and philosophers of his time; his best-selling works, *Common Sense*, *The Crisis*, *Rights of Man*, and *The Age of Reason* fundamentally altered the political and social landscape of the 18th and 19th centuries and helped forge the United States of America. He was an eloquent advocate for equality and representative government, writing, “The true and only true basis of representative government is equality of rights.” He added, “the danger arises from exclusions.”

On July 27, 2022, the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission agreed that the legacy of Thomas Paine rises to “national historical significance” and unanimously voted to support H.R. 6720 without any changes.

H.R. 6720 was included in H.R. 2617, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023,<sup>1</sup> which Congress passed on December 23, 2022. As of the writing of this report, President Biden is expected to sign the bill into law.<sup>2</sup>

#### COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 6720 was introduced on February 11, 2022, by Representative Jamie Raskin (D–MD). The bill was referred solely to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands. On July 14, 2022, the Subcommittee held a hearing on the bill. On December 8, 2022, the Natural Resources Committee met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee was discharged by unanimous consent. The bill was adopted and ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

#### HEARINGS

For the purposes of clause 3(c)(6) of House rule XIII, the following hearing was used to develop or consider this measure: hearing by the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held on July 14, 2022.

#### COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources’ oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII AND CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT

1. *Cost of Legislation and the Congressional Budget Act.* With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and with respect to requirements of clause (3)(c)(3) and clause 3(d) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has requested but not received a cost estimate for this bill from the Director of Congressional Budget Office. The Committee adopts as its own cost estimate the

<sup>1</sup> Division DD, Title VII, Section 709.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/12/23/statement-from-president-joe-biden-on-passage-of-the-bipartisan-year-end-omnibus/>.

forthcoming cost estimate of the Director of the Congressional Budget Office, should such cost estimate be made available before House passage of the bill. The Committee has requested but not received from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office a statement as to whether this bill contains any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures.

2. *General Performance Goals and Objectives.* As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goals and objectives of this bill are to authorize the Thomas Paine Memorial Association to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs.

#### EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

#### UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT STATEMENT

An estimate of federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act was not made available to the Committee in time for the filing of this report. The Chair of the Committee shall cause such estimate to be printed in the *Congressional Record* upon its receipt by the Committee, if such estimate is not publicly available on the Congressional Budget Office website.

#### EXISTING PROGRAMS

This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program.

#### APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

#### PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL, OR TRIBAL LAW

Any preemptive effect of this bill over state, local, or tribal law is intended to be consistent with the bill's purposes and text and the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

#### CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes to existing law.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL, MINORITY, ADDITIONAL, OR DISSENTING VIEWS

None.