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REPORT
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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

JULY 10, 2000.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 2879]

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, to which was referred the Act (H.R. 2879) to provide for the placement at the Lincoln Memorial of a plaque commemorating the speech of Martin Luther King, Jr., known as the "I Have a Dream" speech, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment and recommends that the Act, as amended, do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

"SECTION 1. PLACEMENT OF PLAQUE AT LINCOLN MEMORIAL.

(a) PLACEMENT OF PLAQUE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall install in the area of the Lincoln Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque to commemorate the speech of Martin Luther King, Jr., known as the "I Have a Dream" speech.

(2) RELATION TO COMMEMORATIVE WORKS ACT.—The Commemorative Works Act (40 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.) shall apply to the design and placement of the plaque within the area of the Lincoln Memorial.

(b) ACCEPTANCE OF CONTRIBUTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to accept and expand contributions toward the cost of preparing and installing the plaque, without further appropriation. Federal funds may be used to design, procure, or install the plaque.

PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE

The purpose of H.R. 2879 is to provide for the placement at the Lincoln Memorial of a plaque commemorating the historic speech of Martin Luther King, Jr., commonly known as the "I Have a Dream" speech.

BACKGROUND AND NEED

H.R. 2879 would provide for the placement at the Lincoln Memorial of a plaque commemorating the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream" speech. The bill also directs the Secretary of the Interior to accept contributions to help offset any costs associated with preparation and placement of the plaque.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The House of Representatives passed H.R. 2879 on November 9, 1999. A similar bill, S. 2231, was introduced by Senator Coverdell on March 9, 2000. The Subcommittee on National Parks, Historic Preservation, and Recreation held a hearing on S. 2231 and H.R. 2879 on April 27, 2000. At its business meeting on June 7, 2000, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered H.R. 2879 favorably reported, as amended.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION AND TABULATION OF VOTES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, in open business session on June 7, 2000, by a unanimous vote of a quorum present, recommends that the Senate pass H.R. 2879, if amended as described herein.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

During the consideration of H.R. 2879, the Committee adopted an amendment in the nature of a substitute to provide the Secretary of the Interior discretion in the placement of the plaque, and to ensure that the design and placement of the plaque is in accordance with the provisions of the Commemorative Works Act.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1(a) directs the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the Lincoln Memorial a plaque commemorating the speech by Martin Luther King, Jr., known as the "I Have A Dream" speech.

Paragraph (2) requires the design and placement of the plaque to be in accordance with the Commemorative Work Act (40 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.).

Section 1(b) authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to accept and expand contributions to help pay for the cost of preparing and installing the plaque.

COST AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS

The following estimate of costs of this measure has been provided by the Congressional Budget Office.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, June 9, 2000.

Hon. FRANK H. MURKOWSKI,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 2879, an act to provide

for the placement at the Lincoln Memorial of a plaque commemorating the speech of Martin Luther King Jr., known as the "I Have a Dream" speech.

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

Sincerely,

BARRY B. ANDERSON
(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

H.R. 2879—An act to provide for the placement at the Lincoln Memorial of a plaque commemorating the speech of Martin Luther King Jr., known as the "I Have a Dream" speech

H.R. 2879 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the Lincoln Memorial a plaque commemorating the Martin Luther King Jr. speech, "I Have a Dream." The act would allow the Secretary to accept donations to defray the costs of preparing and installing the plaque. Any amounts received would be credited to the discretionary appropriation that funds operation and maintenance of the memorial.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 2879 would cost less than $50,000 in fiscal year 2001, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. Some of this cost may be offset by private donations, but we expect that any amounts collected would be negligible. Because donations to the government are recorded as revenues, enacting this legislation could affect receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply.

H.R. 2879 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

On November 2, 1999, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 2879, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on October 27, 1999. The two versions of the legislation are very similar, and the costs are identical.

The staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. The estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

REGULATORY IMPACT EVALUATION

In compliance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee makes the following evaluation of the regulatory impact which would be incurred in carrying out H.R. 2879. The bill is not a regulatory measure in the sense of imposing Government-established standards or significant economic responsibilities on private individuals and businesses.

No personal information would be collected in administering the program. Therefore, there would be no impact on personal privacy.

Little, if any, additional paperwork would result from the enactment of H.R. 2879, as ordered reported.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

On April 27, 2000, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources requested legislative reports from the Department of the Interior and the Office of Management and Budget setting forth

Executive agency recommendations on H.R. 2879. These reports had not been received at the time the report on H.R. 2879 was filed. When the reports become available, the Chairman will request that they be printed in the Congressional Record for the advice of the Senate. The testimony provided by the National Park Service at the Subcommittee hearing follows:

STATEMENT OF JOHN G. PARSONS, ASSOCIATE REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR LANDS, RESOURCES, AND PLANNING, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, AND CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL CAPITAL MEMORIAL COMMISSION

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 2231 and H.R. 2879, similar bills to provide for the placement at the Lincoln Memorial of a plaque commemorating the speech of Martin Luther King, Jr., known as the "I Have a Dream" speech.

The Administration supports commemorating Martin Luther King's speech at the Lincoln Memorial in an appropriate way. However, the Department of Interior recommends certain modifications to S. 2231 and H.R. 2879 to address the National Park Service's longstanding policy concerning plaques on important national memorials. This view, shared by the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts, would be addressed by the modifications we propose to the bill, providing the National Park Service with ample discretionary authority in the design and placement of the plaque.

The Lincoln Memorial stands as a symbol of the unification of the states and the healing of the nation after an enormously significant period in our history. The experience of this memorial is a carefully designed emotional sequence in which ascending the steps to the chamber stimulates a strong anticipatory feeling. While an ill-suited or ill-placed marker could blur the personal values that each visitor brings to and takes away from the memorial, a well-conceived and appropriately placed plaque could be compatible with and actually enhance a visitor's experience. It should be noted, however, the National Park Service has already placed an exhibit within the ground level visitor area of the memorial that displays the events that have occurred here.

The proposed marker would honor a pivotal speech by Dr. King, which is viewed as the center point of the Civil Rights movement. Dr. King's speeches at this location in 1957, and again in 1963 contributed immensely to the civil rights movement. In addition, Dr. King's contribution to American history is recognized now by a national holiday, and will be further recognized by the pending memorial to "The Man—The Movement—The Mission," at the site on the Tidal Basin.

The proposal to place a plaque at the location of Dr. King's famous speech is not a new concept. It was in fact mentioned as an alternative in the discussions to commemorate Dr. King here in Washington, D.C., and would

not have been appropriate as a suitable substitute to the memorial. The idea was rejected at the time, by the sponsors of the authorized memorial, the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, of which Dr. King was a member, because of their strong belief that Dr. King's achievement throughout the civil rights movement was much more important than the marking of a singular event, however emotionally stirring or profound its impact on the generations of Americans who heard the speech.

The Lincoln Memorial and the figure of Abraham Lincoln is a shrine for all those who desire to capture the hearts and attention of the nation. The monumental space provides the setting to stir emotions about personal sacrifice, such as Mr. Lincoln's, in the preservation of the Union, as well as the sacrifices of the many who fought, died or were injured in the personal pronouncement of their inherent beliefs. We believe a suitably designed and placed plaque in the area of the Memorial commemorating the "I Have a Dream" speech could be made consistent with these important themes of the Memorial.

Attached are recommended modifications to the bill. We look forward to working with Congress on this legislation and our proposed modifications to this bill. That concludes my prepared testimony on S. 2231 and H.R. 2879, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

A BILL To provide for the placement at the Lincoln Memorial of a plaque commemorating the speech of Martin Luther King, Jr., known as the "I Have a Dream" speech

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PLACEMENT OF PLAQUE AT LINCOLN MEMORIAL.

(a) PLACEMENT OF PLAQUE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall install in the area of the Lincoln Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque to commemorate the speech of Martin Luther King, Jr., known as the "I Have a Dream" speech.

(2) RELATION TO COMMEMORATIVE WORKS ACT.—The Commemorative Works Act (40 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.) shall apply to the design and placement of the plaque within the area of the Lincoln Memorial.

(b) ACCEPTANCE OF CONTRIBUTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall accept contributions to pay the cost of preparing the plaque and installing the plaque. Federal funds may be used to design, procure, or install the plaque.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee notes that no changes in existing law are made by the Act H.R. 2879, as ordered reported.

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