

FRENCH COLONIAL HERITAGE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
STUDY ACT OF 2005

DECEMBER 13, 2005.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. POMBO, from the Committee on Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 1728]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1728) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the French Colonial Heritage Area in the State of Missouri as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “French Colonial Heritage National Historic Site Study Act of 2005”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **AREA.**—The term “Area” means the French Colonial Heritage Area, which includes the Bequette-Ribault, St. Gemme-Amoureux, and Wilhauk homes, and the related and supporting historical assets located in Ste. Genevieve County, Missouri.

(2) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service.

SEC. 3. STUDY.

(a) **In General.**—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this Act, the Secretary shall, in consultation with the State of Missouri—

(1) complete a study on the suitability and feasibility of designating the Area as a unit of the National Park System, which shall include the potential impact that designation of the area as a national heritage area is likely to have on land

within the proposed area or bordering the proposed area that is privately owned at the time that the study is conducted; and

(2) submit to the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report describing the findings of the study.

(b) Contents.—The study under subsection (a) shall be conducted in accordance with Public Law 91–383 (16 U.S.C. 1a–1 et seq.).

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 1728 is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the French Colonial Heritage Area in the State of Missouri as a unit of the National Park Service.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

H.R. 1728 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to complete a study on the suitability and feasibility of designating the French Colonial Heritage Area as a unit of the National Park System. The French Colonial Heritage Area includes the Bequette-Ribault, St. Gemme-Amoureux, and Wilhauk homes, and the related and supporting historical assets in Ste. Genevieve County, Missouri. The Area contains some of the only existing examples of the French Colonial period settlement, including two of the five poteaux-en-terre (post-in-the-ground) vertical log French buildings remaining in North America, dating from circa 1785, in addition to several other important historical resources. Moreover, the Area is located within the expanded boundaries of Ste. Genevieve National Historic District, a National Historic Landmark. Currently, no unit of the National Park System has comparable historic features providing the cultural backdrop required to adequately interpret the story of the early French in the New World.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 1728 was introduced on April 20, 2005, by Congressman Russ Carnahan (D–MO). The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on National Parks. On November 16, 2005, the Committee on Resources met to consider the bill, at which time the Subcommittee on National Parks was discharged from further consideration of the bill by unanimous consent. Congressman Stevan Pearce (R–NM) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute which removed the Findings and Authorization of Appropriations sections of the bill as well as added language directing the Secretary of the Interior to study potential impacts a designation would have on private property owners. The amendment was adopted by unanimous consent. The bill, as amended, was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

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 Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. However, clause 3(d)(3)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

2. Congressional Budget Act. As required by 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, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in tax expenditures. According to the Congressional Budget Office, enactment of this bill would increase offsetting receipts and direct spending, but “any net change in direct spending would be negligible.”

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. This bill does not authorize funding and therefore, clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives does not apply.

4. Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate. Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

H.R. 1728—French Colonial Heritage National Historic Site Study Act of 2005

H.R. 1728 would direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing an area of historical houses in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, as a unit of the National Park System. Based on information provided by the National Park Service and assuming the availability of appropriated funds, CBO estimates that carrying out the proposed study would cost about \$200,000 over the next three years. Enacting H.R. 1728 would not affect direct spending or revenues.

The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

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

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

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

