



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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May 9, 1962

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Dear Senator Anderson:

Your Committee has requested a report on S. 1798, a bill "To provide for the establishment and administration of the Allegheny Parkway in the States of West Virginia and Kentucky and Maryland, and for other purposes."

We recommend that action on this bill be deferred, and that Congress authorize the appropriation of funds to make a study of the proposal.

S. 1798 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire lands and interests in land along the Allegheny Mountains from Hagerstown, Maryland, to Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, in the State of Kentucky, and establish and administer such lands as the Allegheny Parkway.

The establishment of an Allegheny Parkway would preserve in perpetuity an elongated public park of varying width through a highly scenic region of the Allegheny Mountains within easy access of, and serving as a recreation outlet to, larger eastern areas of heavy population. This mountainous region offers opportunities for scenic parkway location of national caliber encompassing great variety, including ridge tops, mountain streams, valleys, gorges, open plateaus, and prairie country. In its approximate 500-mile distance it would provide outstanding recreational motoring facilities for leisurely travel connecting with and furnishing access to existing and proposed State and Federal parks and forests of exceptional quality.

The proposed Allegheny Parkway would have its northern terminus at Hagerstown, Maryland, not far above the mouth of the Shenandoah River at Harpers Ferry National Monument. Interchange connections could be provided with east-west Interstate 70 and north-south Interstate 81 in this area. The parkway could pass through the valleys and ridges of the eastern panhandle and along the Allegheny front where important geologic forces are exhibited. Progressing southward, the parkway could connect and provide access to a number of forests and parks through eastern and southern West Virginia and southeast Kentucky en route to the southern terminus at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park.

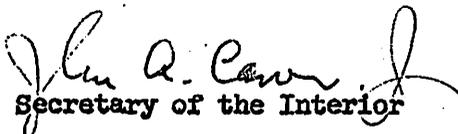
We believe that the proposed parkway has considerable merit. Inasmuch as our studies with respect to the feasibility of the project have not been completed however, we believe that action on the bill should be deferred. An authorization of a project of this magnitude prior to a feasibility report would be premature.

In lieu of this bill, therefore, we suggest that a bill be enacted along the following lines, which is the approach followed only last year in connection with a study of the proposed extension of the Blue Ridge Parkway (P.L. 87-135, H.R. 6067):

"That a sum not exceeding \$97,000 is hereby authorized to be appropriated to be used by the Department of the Interior and by the Department of Commerce to make a study of the feasibility of a national parkway extending from Hagerstown, Maryland, to Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. A final report of such study, accompanied by full information and data, with recommendations, shall at the earliest possible date be made and submitted to the Congress of the United States for its consideration: Provided, That the study of such portions of the proposed national parkway as may be located within the exterior boundaries of a national forest shall be made in cooperation with the Secretary of Agriculture, and the comments and recommendations of the Secretary of Agriculture with respect to such portions shall be set forth in the final report to be submitted to the Congress by the Secretary of the Interior."

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to the presentation of this report from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely yours,


Assistant Secretary of the Interior

Hon. Clinton P. Anderson, Chairman
Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs
United States Senate
Washington 25, D. C.