

GATEWAY VISITOR CENTER AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1999

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MARCH 17, 1999.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, from the Committee on Resources,  
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 449]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 449) to authorize the Gateway Visitor Center at Independence National Historical Park, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 449 is to authorize the Gateway Visitor Center at Independence National Historical Park.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

The National Park Service's general management plan for Independence National Historical Park calls for the revitalization of Independence Mall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. A key component to this revitalization is the construction of a new "Gateway Visitor Center." The new visitor center would replace the current one and would serve as an orientation center not only for Independence Mall, but also for the City of Philadelphia and other regional attractions. This new visitor center would be operated by the Gateway Visitor Center Corporation, a nonprofit organization, representing the various public and civic interests of the greater Philadelphia metropolitan area. The Gateway Visitor Center Corporation will raise funds for and cooperate in a program to design, develop, construct, and operate the proposed Gateway Visitor Center. In addition, all activities engaged in by the Corporation, as author-

ized by the cooperative agreement, shall be used for the operation and administration of the Center.

Private and public funds will be used to develop the visitor center on national park property. As planned, the Center would be an approximately 50,000 square foot visitor facility estimated to cost approximately \$25 million. After construction, the Center would be owned by the National Park Service. The park as a whole attracts more than 3.1 million visitors annually from around the nation and the world to see some of our country's greatest icons like Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. The park's current visitor center is poorly located and inconvenient to the majority of visitors. Furthermore, the current housing for the Liberty Bell is obsolete and needs to be moved to a better location.

H.R. 449 would establish the Gateway Visitor Center at Independence National Historical Park by authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to enter into a cooperative agreement with Gateway Visitor Center Corporation to construct and operate a regional visitor center on Independence Mall to provide information, interpretation, facilities, and services to visitors to Independence National Historical Park, its surrounding historic sites, and the City of Philadelphia. Revenues generated by the Corporation by authorized activities shall be used to operate and administer the Center.

#### COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 449 was introduced on February 2, 1999, by Congressman Robert Borski (D-PA). The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands. On February 25, 1999, the Subcommittee met to consider the bill. No amendments were offered and the bill was ordered favorably reported to the Full Resource Committee by voice vote. On March 3, 1999, the Full Resources Committee met to consider H.R. 449. No amendments were offered and the bill was then ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by voice vote.

#### 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 and Article IV, section 3 of the Constitution of the United States grant 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 pre-

pared 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 revenues or tax expenditures.

3. Government Reform Oversight Findings. Under clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee has received no report of oversight findings and recommendations from the Committee on Government Reform on this bill.

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:

U.S. CONGRESS,  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,  
*Washington, DC, March 10, 1999.*

Hon. DON YOUNG,  
*Chairman, Committee on Resources,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 449, the Gateway Visitor Center Authorization Act of 1999.

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

Sincerely,

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

Enclosure.

*H.R. 449—Gateway Visitor Center Authorization Act of 1999*

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 449 would cost less than \$1 million a year, subject to the availability of appropriated funds. H.R. 449 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to execute an agreement with the Gateway Visitor Center Corporation under which this nonprofit organization would construct and operate a regional visitor center on Independence Mall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The bill would authorize the corporation to charge fees, sell food, merchandise, and tickets, and provide information, facilities, and services to visitors to the Independence National Historical Park and other regional sites. Amounts earned from fees and sales would be used by the corporation to help pay for its operating expenses. The National Park Service (NPS) would provide visitor information and facilities and offer interpretive programs.

Based on information provided by the NPS, and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO expects that the agency would provide an annual contribution toward the operation of the center. The appropriate federal contribution has not yet been determined by the NPS, but CBO estimates that it could be several hundred thousand dollars a year. Some of the annual contribution may

be offset by savings in operating expenses that may be realized when the NPS closes its existing visitor center at the park once the new Gateway Visitor Center becomes operational in fiscal year 2000.

H.R. 449 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

The CBO staff contact is Deborah Reis. This estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

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

