

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

BLACKWELL SCHOOL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE ACT

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4706) to establish the Blackwell School National Historic Site in Marfa, Texas, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4706

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Blackwell School National Historic Site Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.—The term "national historic site" means the Blackwell School, in Marfa, Texas.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Congress finds as follows:

(1) The Blackwell School, located at 501 South Abbott Street, in Marfa, Presidio County, Texas, is associated with the period of racial segregation in Marfa public schools and is the sole extant property directly associated with Hispanic education in the community, the remaining buildings having been torn down after the school closed in 1965.

(2) The Blackwell School is a tangible reminder of a time when the practice of "separate but equal" dominated education and social systems. Despite being categorized as "white" by Texas law, Mexican Americans were regularly excluded from commingling with Anglos at barbershops, restaurants, funeral homes, theaters, churches, and schools.

(3) The spectrum of experiences of students and teachers at the Blackwell School constitute an important record of life in a segregated school in the context of the history of Texas and America.

(4) Mexican and Mexican American culture and history in Marfa is tied to the Blackwell School, which for more than 50 years served as a leading feature of the Hispanic community, illustrating the challenge of maintaining cultural identity in a dominant Anglo society. Yet today, Hispanic influences are seen in Marfa's social and religious organizations, business and government institutions, and shared experiences of language, food, and music.

(5) The historic Blackwell School building is a physical record of the longevity and beauty of the distinctive design and craftsmanship informed by both traditional techniques and materials, and the transition from purely the vernacular to the period of materials, design, and workmanship made available after the arrival of the railroad. The original historic school building and grounds on which it stands provide an authentic setting to commemorate and interpret the history of the Blackwell School.

(6) The Blackwell School is closely associated with the broad patterns of local, State, and national history in the area of school segregation. Mexicans and other members of the Latin American diaspora have placed a high value upon education as a means of economic, social, and political advancement.

(7) Mexican Americans and other members of the Latin American diaspora have placed

a high value upon education as a means of economic, social, and political advancement. However, Hispanics and Latinos have not always had equitable opportunities and access to quality educational facilities in the United States.

SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BLACKWELL SCHOOL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), there is established the Blackwell School National Historic Site in the State of Texas as a unit of the National Park System to preserve, protect and interpret for the benefit of present and future generations the Blackwell School, its role as both an academic and cultural cornerstone in the community in Marfa, Texas, and its function within a segregated system of education in Texas and the United States from 1885 through 1965.

(2) CONDITIONS.—The national historic site shall not be established until the date on which the Secretary has—

(A) entered into a written agreement with the Marfa Unified School District providing that the Blackwell School shall be donated to or placed by agreement into co-management with the United States for inclusion in a national historic site to be managed consistently with the purposes of a national historic site; and

(B) acquired sufficient land or interests in land within the boundaries of the national historic site to constitute a manageable unit.

(b) BOUNDARIES.—The boundaries of the national historic site shall be the boundaries generally depicted on the map.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(d) ACQUISITION OF AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may only acquire any land or interest in land located within the boundary of the national historic site by—

- (1) donation;
- (2) purchase with donated funds; or
- (3) exchange.

(e) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer this national historic site in accordance with—

(A) this Act; and

(B) the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System.

(2) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(A) Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available to the Secretary for this purpose, the Secretary shall prepare a general management plan for the national historic site in accordance with section 100502 of title 54, United States Code.

(B) Upon completion, the Secretary shall submit the general management plan prepared pursuant to subparagraph (A) to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

(f) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary shall enter into cooperative agreements with the Blackwell School Alliance (and other local, regional, State, academic and nonprofit partners) for interpretive and educational programming, technical assistance, and rehabilitation related to the national historic site.

(g) WRITTEN CONSENT OF OWNER.—No private property or non-Federal public property shall be included within the boundaries of the national historic site or managed as part of the national historic site without the written consent of the owner of such property.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from

New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Mexico.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4706, the Blackwell School National Historic Site Act, introduced by my colleague, Representative TONY GONZALES of Texas.

This bill would direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish the Blackwell School National Historic Site to preserve, protect, and interpret the role of the Blackwell School as an academic and cultural cornerstone in Marfa, Texas.

The Blackwell School was the sole public education institution for Mexican-American children in Marfa from 1909 until 1965, when Marfa schools were integrated.

The building is a tangible reminder of a time in American history when separate but equal remained so prevalent in our culture. It is a powerful reminder of the work that still remains before us today.

Approximately 4,000 students attended the Blackwell School over the course of more than 50 years. Despite the inherent unfairness of segregation, the Blackwell School became a meeting place and source of pride for the local Hispanic community.

Today, all that remains of the once sprawling campus is a three-room adobe schoolhouse—one of the last such schools remaining in Texas. Designating the Blackwell School as a national historic site ensures that the story of this school is maintained so that future Americans can learn from and understand its rich and complex history.

Madam Speaker, I attended a school that was likewise, in its history, segregated. Hispanos attended school on one side of the town and all others on the other side.

I congratulate Representative GONZALES for championing this bill to bring awareness that this is simply part of our history and we must recognize it and understand it.

Madam Speaker, I urge everyone to support this bill today, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4706, offered by Representative

TONY GONZALES of Texas, to establish the Blackwell School National Historic Site in Marfa, Texas, as a unit of the National Park system.

Segregation education began in Marfa in 1892 following the completion of a new school for the city's White students. The Blackwell School served as the sole public education institution for the city of Marfa, Texas', Mexican and Mexican-American children from 1909 to 1965.

Known originally as the Ward or Mexican School, the Blackwell School was later renamed for its longtime principal, Jesse Blackwell, who arrived in 1922. During Blackwell's 25-year tenure, the school grew from one building and 120 students to a multi-building campus and more than 600 students.

The original historic school building and grounds provide an authentic setting to commemorate and interpret the history of the Blackwell School. Designation as a national historic site is locally supported and the designation helps meet needs identified in the National Park Services' American Latino Theme Study completed in 2013.

Madam Speaker, I highly commend my colleague from Texas (Mr. TONY GONZALES) for his work on commemorating this important landmark. I urge adoption of the measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TONY GONZALES), the author of this bill.

Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 4706, the Blackwell School National Historic Site Act.

The Blackwell School is located in the heart of my district, Marfa, Texas. This week we are voting on legislation that makes this landmark a national historic site under the National Park Service.

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When it comes to recognizing lands as national historic sites or national parks, it is paramount to look outside traditional parameters. We must identify and preserve our history from all walks of life and share stories of forgotten Americans, including the history of Mexican Americans and their struggle for equality.

The Blackwell School operated from 1909 to 1965 as a segregated school for children of Mexican descent. While segregation was mandated by law for African Americans, it was optional for school districts to segregate Mexican students. Marfa chose to segregate. Children who attended the Blackwell School were banned from speaking Spanish and even had to bury slips of paper with Spanish words in a mock funeral ceremony.

The school operated during a time of American history when separate but equal dominated our culture. Segrega-

tion is an ugly stain on America's legacy, and while we have progressed as a country, we must acknowledge the painful role segregation played in our Nation's history.

Establishing the Blackwell School as a national historic site ensures that the building is maintained properly so generations to come can understand its rich but complicated history. The impact of establishing this landmark as a national historic site goes beyond cultural influence as well. My district is home to eight of Texas' 16 national parks such as Big Bend National Park. As I traveled through my district, I have seen the positive economic and societal impacts our national parks have on our communities. Establishing the Blackwell School as a national landmark would bring increased tourism and increased economic activity to Presidio County and Marfa.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my friend, FIL VELA, for cosponsoring this bill; Natural Resources Chairman RAÚL GRIJALVA; and, of course, Ranking Member BRUCE WESTERMAN for prioritizing this legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas. Madam Speaker, most importantly, I would like to thank the Blackwell School Alliance and the National Parks Conservation Association for their commitment to giving this landmark the recognition it deserves. The Blackwell School has been an important piece of history for west Texas and many Mexican Americans across the country, and we are ready to share it with the world.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I am ready to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers. I want to encourage adoption of this bill and, again, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his hard work in bringing this bill forward. I hope we can all get behind it. I urge adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I too want to recognize and acknowledge the importance of this bill and Representative GONZALES's bringing it to our attention because we must remember that all stories—all stories—whether they be good or bad, whether they concern segregation or celebration, are American stories, and this bill assists us in looking at the complexity of the American story.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in proud support of H.R. 4706, "The Blackwell School National Historic Site Act."

I would like to thank Congressman TONY GONZALES for introducing this bill.

This bill would establish Blackwell School National Historic Site as a unit of the National

Park System when the Secretary of the Interior enters into a written agreement with the Marfa Unified School District for donation or co-management of the site and acquires sufficient lands within the boundaries of the national historic site to constitute a manageable unit.

The NPS would be required to develop a management plan for the site no later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available for this purpose.

The bill also directs the Secretary of the Interior to enter into cooperative agreements with the Blackwell School Alliance (and other partners) for interpretive and educational programming, technical assistance, and rehabilitation for the site.

The Blackwell School operated in Marfa, Texas, as a segregated school for children of Mexican descent from 1909 until Marfa schools were integrated in 1965.

Yet this is much more than just a local story.

The original historic school building, and grounds on which it stands, provide an authentic setting to commemorate and interpret a time when "separate but equal" dominated our culture in ways currently unknown, and essential to understanding the American experience.

The Blackwell School Alliance has been working 15 years to preserve the stories, legacy, and buildings associated with the Blackwell School.

We have partnered with many universities, state agencies, private foundations, individuals, and the City of Marfa to document and promote this important piece of Marfa history.

This park would not only have an emotional impact, but it would also help preserve key history for the people of Marfa, Texas.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4706.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. PERRY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

COURTHOUSE ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5720) to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to provide for a periodic transaction reporting requirement for Federal judicial officers and the online publication of financial disclosure reports of Federal judicial officers, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5720

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