

AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSITION OF RECREATIONAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

MARCH 13, 1941.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the
state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. ROBINSON of Utah, from the Committee on the Public Lands,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 2685]

The Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 2685) to authorize the disposition of recreational demonstration projects, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass, and authorize the use of all parliamentary means to bring this bill before the House.

The amendment is as follows:

Page 1, line 3, strike out the figure "3" and insert in lieu thereof the figure "2".

STATEMENT OF FACTS

A bill (H. R. 3959) providing for the disposition of recreational demonstration projects, was enacted during the first session of the Seventy-sixth Congress, but the bill was vetoed by the President. A copy of the President's veto, as printed in the Congressional Record of the 14th of August, 1939, is reproduced in full in this report. The pending bill contains the provisions designed to meet the objections of the President to this legislation.

The report of the Department of the Interior and the veto message referred to above are hereinbelow reproduced in full and made a part of this report.

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, March 11, 1941.

HON. J. W. ROBINSON,
*Chairman, Committee on the Public Lands,
House of Representatives.*

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Further reference is made to your request for the views of this Department on H. R. 2685, entitled "A bill to authorize the disposition of recreational demonstration projects, and for other purposes."

I recommend that H. R. 2685 be enacted.

A bill (H. R. 3959) providing for the disposition of recreational demonstration projects, was enacted during the first session of the Seventy-sixth Congress, but

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the bill was vetoed by the President. A copy of the President's veto message, as printed in the Congressional Record for August 14, 1939, is enclosed. The pending bill contains provisions designed to meet the objections of the President to this legislation.

The purpose of this proposed legislation is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior, with the approval of the President, to convey or lease to the States, or to the political subdivisions thereof, without consideration, recreational demonstration projects formerly under the administrative jurisdiction of the Resettlement Administration and transferred to the Secretary of the Interior by Executive Order No. 7496, November 14, 1936. Those projects were acquired and developed principally under the provisions of the National Industrial Recovery Act of June 16, 1933, and the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935. The planning for their development has been carried on with a view to the recreational needs of the surrounding communities, in contemplation of their ultimate transfer to State or municipal ownership and control.

Of the 46 projects transferred to the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior, a few are adjacent to existing national parks and monuments. Two of the projects have already been made part of the Blue Ridge Parkway by the act of June 30, 1936 (49 Stat. 2041). Two of the projects possess national historical significance. A part of the French Creek project, Pennsylvania, has already been included within the Hopewell Village National Historic Site, established August 3, 1938 (3 F. R. 2039, DI). The Bull Run project, Virginia, has been included within a national historic site commemorating the Battle of Manassas.

The Attorney General has held that the proposed transfers or leases to the States or political subdivisions of States, without consideration, may not be made under the existing authority to dispose of the projects.

The transfers to the States which would be authorized by the proposed legislation would be to the mutual advantage of the United States and the transferees. They would enable local authorities to supplement their recreational facilities under local control, and would avoid the further expenditure of Federal funds for administration, development, and maintenance. Certain of the projects are desirable for addition to existing national parks and monuments, as provided in section 2 of the bill.

Your attention is called to a typographical error on page 1, line 3. The figure "3" should be changed to "2".

I have been advised by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget that there would be no objection by that Bureau to the presentation of this report to the Congress.

Sincerely yours,

HAROLD L. ICKES,
Secretary of the Interior.

Enclosure 2161050.

VETO MESSAGE OF AUGUST 11, 1939

[From Congressional Record of August 14, 1939, H. R. 3959, disposition of recreational demonstration areas]

H. R. 3959. I have withheld my approval of H. R. 3959, an act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to dispose of recreational demonstration projects, and for other purposes.

While the objective of this legislation is good, I am inclined to think that certain safeguards should at least be studied at the next session of the Congress.

It should probably be made more clear that equitable arrangements with local communities taking over such recreational projects should involve the Federal Government in no legal or moral commitments.

There should probably be a provision allowing departments of the Government to take over for their purposes such projects as it seems desirable for the Interior Department to part with.

Probably the approval of the President should be given to any transfers of these properties to local communities or other departments as this is the general rule in similar cases.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
August 11, 1939.