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# ALEUTIAN WORLD WAR II NATIONAL HISTORIC AREAS ACT OF 1996

SEPTEMBER 30, 1996.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, submitted the following

## REPORT

[To accompany S. 1809]

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, to which was referred the bill (S. 1809) entitled "Aleutian World War II National Historic Areas Act of 1996", having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

### PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE

The purposes of S. 1809 are to designate and preserve the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area within lands owned by the Ounalaska Corporation on the island of Amaknak, Alaska, and to provide for the interpretation of the history and role of the Aleut people and the Aleutian Islands in the defense of the United States during World War II.

### BACKGROUND AND NEED

The Aleutian Islands form an 1,100 mile volcanic arc that sweeps out into the North Pacific Ocean off the Alaska mainland. To the north is the Bering Sea and to the southwest are the Kurile Islands. During World War II, the Aleutian Islands came under attack. The Aleutian islands of Unalaska and Amaknak were raided and bombed by Japanese aircraft in one of the few sieges on United States territory.

During the War, Alaska Native people from 23 villages were evacuated from the region and many were interned in relocation camps. As a result of the devastating bombing by the Japanese, the

city of Unalaska, located on Unalaska Island, was the only village that was reinhabited following the World War II effort.

The Dutch Harbor National Historic Landmark located on Amaknak Island and adjacent to the larger Aleutian island of Unalaska, is one of eight World War II National Historic Landmarks in Alaska that were designated from 1985 to 1987. The National Historic Landmarks in the Aleutians represent the Allied and Japanese battle to control the strategically located Aleutian Island chain.

The 1978, Section 6 of Public Law 95–348 established War in the Pacific National Historical Park on Guam and mandated the National Park Service to provide a study of sites and areas associated with the Pacific Campaign during World War II. In response, the National Park Service conducted a study of the World War II National Historic Landmarks in the Aleutian Islands and concluded that the National Historic Landmark at Dutch Harbor in Unalaska was both feasible and suitable for establishment as a new area of the National Park System in terms of access, existing infrastructure, cost and integrity of resource.

Historic resources on Amaknak Island at Dutch Harbor include over two dozen ammunition magazines; a short airstrip and hangar; Ulatka Head, the highest coastal defense battery ever constructed in the United States; and several significant World War II era structures which were part of the Naval Operating Base and the Iliuliuk Submarine Base.

The Ounalaska Corporation is the Alaska Native village corporation for the Unalaska region of the Western Aleutian Islands. The Corporation is the major land owner on Amaknak Island and adjacent Unalaska Island.

This bill would designate and preserve the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area within lands owned by the Ounalaska Corporation on the island of Amaknak, Alaska, and would provide for the interpretation of the history and role of the Aleut people and the Aleutian Islands in the defense of the United States during World War II.

No land exchanges, conveyances, acquisition, or day-to-day operational expenses would be authorized through this bill. The Ounalaska Corporation would maintain ownership and control of the lands, buildings and historic structures which would comprise the historic area. The Secretary of the Interior would be authorized to award grants and provide technical assistance to the Corporation and the city of Unalaska to assist with the planning, development, and historic preservation.

## LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

S. 1809 was introduced by Senator Murkowski on May 23, 1996. Senator Stevens was added as a cosponsor on June 13, 1996. The Subcommittee on Parks, Historic Preservation and Recreation held a hearing on the bill on July 25, 1996. At the business meeting on September 12, 1996, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources ordered S. 1809 favorably reported.

## COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, in open business session on September 12, 1996, by a unanimous voice vote of a quorum present, recommends that the Senate pass S. 1809.

## SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1 entitles the Act the "Aleutian World War II National Historic Areas Act of 1996."

Section 2 describes the purposes of the Act as designating, preserving and providing for the interpretation of the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area within lands owned by the Ounalaska Corporation on the Island of Amaknak, Alaska.

Section 3 directs that the boundaries of the National Historic Area shall be comprised of areas on Amaknak island as depicted on a map.

Section 4 directs that nothing in the Act shall authorize the conveyance of lands between the Ounalaska Corporation and the United States Department of the Interior or remove land or structures from the exclusive control of the Ounalaska Corporation; or provide authority for the Department of the Interior from assuming duties associated with the daily operation of the Historic Area or any of its facilities or structures.

Section 5 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to award grants and provide technical assistance to the Ounalaska Corporation and the city of Unalaska to assist in the planning, development, and historic preservation of the Historic Area resources.

## COST AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS

The following estimate of the cost of this measure has been provided by the Congressional Budget Office.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
*Washington, DC, September 23, 1996.*

Hon. FRANK H. MURKOWSKI,
*Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,*
*U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has reviewed S. 1809, the Aleutian World War II National Historic Areas Act of 1996, as reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on September 16, 1996. We estimate that the federal government would spend less than $50,000 annually to implement this bill, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts. Enacting S. 1809 would not affect direct spending or receipts. Therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply to the bill.

S. 1809 would designate certain lands on the island of Amaknak, Alaska, as the Aleutian World War II National Historic Areas. These lands would continue to be owned and maintained by the Ounalaska Corporation. The bill would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to provide the corporation and the city of Unalaska with financial and technical assistance for planning, development, and preservation purposes.

Assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that the National Park Service (NPS) would spend less than $50,000 annually for grants to the corporation and the city. The NPS already provides technical assistance for preservation of local historical properties.

S. 1809 contains no private-sector or intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Public Law 104–4) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

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

Sincerely,

JUNE E. O'NEILL, *Director.*

## REGULATORY IMPACT EVALUATION

In compliance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee makes the following evaluation of the regulatory impact which would be incurred in carrying out S. 1809. The bill is not a regulatory measure in the sense of imposing Government-established standards or significant economic responsibilities on private individuals and businesses.

No personal information would be collected in administering the program. Therefore, there would be no impact on personal privacy.

Little, if any, additional paperwork would result from the enactment of S. 1809, as ordered reported.

## EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

On September 13, 1996, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources requested legislative reports from the Department of the Interior and the Office of Management and Budget setting forth Executive agency recommendations on S. 1809. These reports had not been received at the time the report on S. 1809 was filed. When these reports become available, the Chairman will request that they be printed in the Congressional Record for the advice of the Senate. The testimony provided by the Department of the Interior at the Subcommittee hearing follows:

### STATEMENT BY JOHN REYNOLDS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

I appreciate the opportunity to appear today to present the position of the Department of the Interior on S. 1809, a bill to provide for the designation of a World War II historic area on Native Corporation land on Unalaska Island in the Aleutian Islands. We support this bill.

S. 1809 would designate an area on Amaknak Island of the Aleutian Islands as a "national historic area." Because the area would be administered by a private entity on private lands, it would not legally be considered a unit of the National Park system. It would, instead, have the status of an "affiliated area" of the National Park system. We should also note that this site could also be considered for Congressional designation as a National Heritage Area. Such designation may be more appropriate than affiliated

area status since this site is owned and maintained by a non-federal entity and the National Park Service role is to provide grants and technical assistance.

The Aleutian Islands extend from the Alaska peninsula toward Japan in a long volcanic arc that stands between the Pacific Ocean and the Bering Sea. The area that would be designated by the bill as a national area is owned by the Ounalaskha Corporation. The bill provides that the Ounalaskha Corporation would be responsible for operating the national historic area. The bill would also prohibit the Department of the Interior from acquiring lands within the site, or from exercising management control over the area. Section 5 of the bill, however, would allow the Secretary of the Interior to award grants and provide technical assistance to the Ounalaskha Corporation in its administration of the site.

The 81-acre site is clearly worthy of this recognition. It is located on Ulatka Head, a high promontory of land that dominates Unalaska Bay on Amaknak Island. During World War II this ridge formed the kingpin of the defensive Iron Ring across the bay.

The Aleutian Campaign in the War in the Pacific, known as the forgotten campaign, directly involved close to two hundred thousand American, Canadian, and Japanese military and civilians. The campaign resonated with Americans all over the world as it involved the only battles of World War II that were fought on American soil.

The bombing of Dutch Harbor on Unalaska, the Battle of Attu, and the bombing and invasion of Kiska Island, were the crucial events of the Campaign. Approximately 1,000 American and Canadian men lost their lives between June 1942 and August 1943. The Japanese invasion forces lost their entire garrison on Attu Island; in addition, another 1,650 lives were lost on Kiska and at sea.

Billions of dollars were invested in the construction of a military theater on these remote islands at a pace that was astounding even by today's standards. American troops overcame Aleutian weather and spectacular volcanic terrain in reclaiming American territory on Attu and Kiska. Less heroically, these events forced the relocation and internment of over 800 Native Aleut for the duration of World War II. Nearly 80 Aleut leaders and elders died during the relocation, which led to the depredation of Aleut culture. The evacuation represents the largest per capita civilian displacement of U.S. residents from any U.S. jurisdiction.

The site contemplated by S. 1809 is within the boundaries of the Dutch Harbor Naval Operating Base and Fort Mears, a U.S. Army National Historic Landmark designated in 1987. Previous NPS studies conducted under Section 6 of Public Law 95–348, which established War in the Pacific National Historical Park on Guam in 1978, determined that this site was a component of a large area in the Aleutian Island that possessed resources feasible and

suitable for designation as a unit of the national park system.

The establishment of this historic area would provide the Ounalaskha Corporation with an opportunity to preserve and protect Aleutian resources. It would commemorate the effects of war and other events that continue to change the villages and landscapes of these islands, which are rich in natural and cultural resources. The need to recognize the importance of this area has long been expressed by the Unalaska community at large, local, state, and national historical associations and organizations, veteran's groups and organizations, and the military.

In addition, themes relating to Aleut and Russian culture and history, set against backdrop of Aleutian tundra and wildlife, are not represented in the National Park system. For at least the last five years, the National Park Service has listed all three of Ounalaskha's National Historic Landmarks as endangered or threatened. If this bill is enacted, the National Park Service would be able to offer the Ounalaskha Corporation the use of its skills and experience in the areas of cultural and natural resource education and historic preservation, and help the corporation interpret the story of the forgotten campaign in the Aleutian Islands for the American people.

This concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any of your questions.

## CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee notes that no changes in existing law are made by the bill S. 1809 as reported.

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