118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION  

H. R. ______

To prepare the National Park Service for America’s Semiquincentennial by reevaluating and recommitting to efforts to protect and sustain the resiliency of our Nation’s cultural resources for the enjoyment, wellbeing, and education of all present and future generations.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Tonko introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on __________________

A BILL

To prepare the National Park Service for America’s Semiquincentennial by reevaluating and recommitting to efforts to protect and sustain the resiliency of our Nation’s cultural resources for the enjoyment, wellbeing, and education of all present and future generations.

1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the “Cultural Resource
5 Challenge Act of 2024”.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE CULTURAL RESOURCE CHALLENGE.

(a) REQUIREMENTS.—The Director of the National Park Service (hereafter in this Act referred to as the “Director”) shall enhance cultural resources work within the National Park System, including—

(1) reviewing, updating, and improving access to National Park Service guidance for cultural resource identification, management, maintenance, preservation, restoration, and documentation, digitization, interpretation, communication, education;

(2) advancing the identification, management, maintenance, preservation, restoration, and documentation, digitization, interpretation, communication, education of cultural resources within the National Park System;

(3) assessing gaps in the National Park System, National Historic Landmarks, and the National Register of Historic Places programs regarding sites related to underrepresented groups and resource types, and identify and implement strategies and initiatives for their inclusion;

(4) identifying and filling critical workforce vacancies within parks, the regions, and the Wash-
ington Support Office to ensure an effective and efficient program of cultural resource management;

(5) encouraging skill-sharing between parks and regional offices, and external groups to meet critical training needs and facilitate cross-learning;

(6) providing relevant training and technical guidance to State Historic Preservation Offices, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, National Heritage Area System units, certified local governments, Federal preservation officers, government agencies, and others;

(7) promoting an interdisciplinary research approach to addressing critical resource management issues, including climate change, sustainability, and geographic information system standards, including through increased coordination between cultural and natural resource research and science programs; and

(8) other projects or programs as determined appropriate by the Director.

(b) PROGRESS.—No later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to Congress, an update on the progress meeting requirements under subsection (a).
SEC. 3. CULTURAL RESOURCE CHALLENGE RESILIENCE

GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) PLANNING GRANTS.—

(1) AWARDS.—The Director shall carry out a program of awarding grants to assist eligible entities in the preparation of an application for a grant under subsection (b), including community engagement, project planning and design, and capacity.

(2) AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant under paragraph (1), with respect to any organization seeking such a grant shall not exceed $75,000.

(b) PROGRAM AND PROJECT GRANTS.—

(1) AWARDS.—The Director shall carry out a program of awarding grants, on a competitive basis, to improve the resiliency of our nation’s cultural resources, including by—

(A) advancing the identification, management, maintenance, preservation, restoration, and documentation, digitization, interpretation, communication, education of cultural resources, including supporting baseline research;

(B) creating or supporting the operation of integrated data systems that maximize the accessibility of cultural resource inventory, evaluation, documentation, and treatment information;
(C) providing relevant training and technical guidance to State Historic Preservation Offices, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, National Heritage Area System units, certified local governments, Federal preservation officers, government agencies, and others; and

(D) implementing other relevant projects or programs as determined appropriate by the Director.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible for a grant under this Act, an entity shall be, or be partnered with, a State, Local, Tribal, territorial government, an educational institution, a Tribal historic preservation office, a State historic preservation office, a non-profit organization.

(3) COST-SHARE.—The Federal share of a grant awarded under the Program may not exceed 80 percent of total cost of the project.

(4) WAIVER FOR COST-SHARE REQUIREMENT.—The Director may waive the limitation in paragraph (3) for certain projects—

(A) that are in collaboration with Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, federally recognized Indian Tribes, or Native Hawaiian organizations; and
(B) with minimal costs under $10,000.

(e) PRIORITIZATION.—In awarding the grants under this section, the Secretary shall prioritize projects that—

(1) consider and address the role of climate change in protecting our Nation’s cultural resources;

(2) expand and improve support to Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Alaskan Natives, minority, and other underrepresented groups involved in national historic preservation programs and the preservation of their culture;

(3) support or engage storytelling and oral history to support intangible heritage and knowledge; and

(4) incorporate an effort to engage and empower future generations in historic preservation, history, and archeology programs.

SEC. 4. CULTURAL RESOURCES CAREER ACADEMY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall develop a comprehensive Cultural Resource Career Academy curriculum to provide cultural resource management training to all park managers and staff with responsibilities for managing and preserving cultural resources. In developing this curriculum, the Director shall include training on—

(1) the role of climate change in protecting our Nation’s cultural resources;
(2) best practices for the preservation of cultural resources from Native American, minority, and other underrepresented communities, including cultural competency for community engagement;

(3) how storytelling and oral history can support intangible heritage and knowledge; and

(4) best practices for how to engage the next and future generations in historic and cultural resource preservation, reflection, and celebration.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the Director for fiscal year 2025, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, $20,000,000 to remain available until expended, to carry out subsection (a).

SEC. 5. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit to Congress, and release to the public, a report on the progress of carrying out this Act. The report shall include—

(1) a summary of the status projects and programs undertaken or implemented;

(2) explanation for how National Park Service offices have coordinated and prioritized efforts to advance management of cultural resources; and
(3) an explanation of how the Director selected
grants using the criteria in section 3.

3 SEC. 6. STATE OF OUR CULTURAL RESOURCES REPORT.

(a) CONTENT.—Not later than 4 years after the date
of enactment of this Act, the Advisory Council on Historic
Preservation, in collaboration with the Director, shall com-
plete and publish a report on the State of the cultural
resources of the United States, including—

(1) a summary of relevant documents and guid-
ance prepared by the National Park Service for the
management of cultural resources;

(2) a summary of efforts to protect cultural
heritage from the impacts of climate-related risks;

(3) an assessment of remaining cultural re-
sources workforce and workforce gaps of the Na-
tional Park Service;

(4) needs for future funding; and

(5) a summary of partnerships between the Na-
tional Park Service and other agencies and entities
to restore, protect, and promote the cultural re-
sources of the United States.

(b) EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT.—In writing the report
required under subsection (a), the Director and the Advi-
sory Council on Historic Preservation shall engage with,
credit, and compensate necessary relevant external experts.

**SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

(a) In General.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this Act $250,000,000 for fiscal years 2025 through 2030.

(b) Limitation on Use of Funds.—No funds made available for this Act may be—

1. taken from the existing and future Historic Preservation Fund;
2. used to acquire lands or interest in lands by the Federal Government; or
3. used for projects involving demolition of cultural resources.