



# Protecting America's Heritage Areas

H.R. 1049, 116<sup>th</sup> Congress

Sponsors: Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY) & Rep. David McKinley (R-WV)

*"We are all trustees for the American people, custodians of the American heritage."*

❖ John F. Kennedy, 1962 State of the Union

## Heritage Areas Tell America's Stories

- National Heritage Areas are sites of cultural, historical or natural significance. Supported by public-private partnerships, they shine a light on, and give back to, their local communities
- Supporting partnerships bring local, state & private stakeholders together in Congressional districts across the U.S. to shine light on previously untold stories & bring new voices to the fore

## Major Economic & Social Benefits

- Cultural heritage tourism adds more than **\$192 billion** to the U.S. economy every year
- Public & private partners match an avg. **\$5.50** for every **\$1** in federal funding
- Sites support more than 148,000 jobs every year, and that's not all:
  - **53,000 volunteers** engage with **55 established heritage areas**
  - **200 education programs** that reach more than **600,000 people** a year
  - 880 miles of new trails & nearly 200 miles of preserved waterways & historic canals
  - Water and air quality improvements through restoration projects



Public and private partners match an average of **\$5.50** for every **\$1** in federal funding for heritage sites.

## Congress Can Do Better!

- The process for establishing, funding and managing National Heritage Areas is haphazard
- As a result, areas of great local importance are being underutilized

### H.R. 1049: The National Heritage Area Act

- Establishes, for the first time, standard criteria for designating new National Heritage Areas and creates a rigorous process for maintaining existing National Heritage Areas
- Modernizes the program to allow for long-term sustainability and strong accountability
- Defines an oversight structure that will effectively allow these popular public-private partnerships to better preserve the nation's heritage and spur economic growth with basic federal support

***There are 55 National Heritage Areas across the country. Support your local heritage area today!***

Connect with Representative Tonko on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @RepPaulTonko