

National Park Service Memo - Gateway [Independence] Visitor Center
Authorization Act
January 3, 2000



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240



L58 (0120)

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Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Northeast Region
From: Director
Subject: Activation: P.L. 106-131, Gateway Visitor Center Authorization Act of 1999

On December 7, 1999, President Clinton approved H.R. 449, a bill to authorize the Gateway Visitor Center at Independence National Historical Park as Public Law 106-131. A copy of the public law and copies of committee reports and pertinent sections from the *Congressional Record* are attached.

In the 105th Congress legislation similar to H.R. 449 was introduced and was the subject of House and Senate hearings and committee action; however, the legislation was not passed in the 105th Congress. In the 106th Congress the House Resources Committee viewed H.R. 449 as carryover business from the 105th Congress and did not hold a hearing on the bill. The committee reported H.R. 449 without amendment on February 25, 1999. The House took up and passed H.R. 449 as reported by the committee on April 12, 1999.

The Senate companion bill, S. 582, was the subject of a hearing on April 15, 1999. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee chose to mark up and report H.R. 449 instead of S. 582. The committee reported H.R. 449 without amendment and the Senate subsequently passed H.R. 449 on November 19, 1999.

Public Law 106-131 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Gateway Visitor Center Corporation (the Corporation) to construct and operate a regional visitor center at Independence National Historical Park. Such a center shall be developed and operated in cooperation with the Secretary of the Interior and shall be the primary visitor center for Independence National Historical Park as well as the greater Philadelphia metropolitan region.

Because the visitor center will serve the Philadelphia metropolitan area and not just Independence National Historical Park, activities appropriate for a regional visitor center are permitted, many of which are more than those permitted in National Park Service owned and operated visitor centers. The cooperative agreement shall be the formal document and mechanism that authorizes the Corporation to undertake those activities. The cooperative agreement shall also provide the National Park Service the authority to conduct various activities

at the regional visitor center regarding management of Independence National Historical Park and provision of services to park visitors. The agreement should spell out the extent of activities and services being provided by the National Park Service as well as those being undertaken by the Corporation. However, neither the National Park Service nor the Corporation may conduct any activities that will result in the derogation of Independence National Historical Park's resources or values.

The revenues generated by the activities being run by the Corporation at the visitor center shall be used for the operation and administration of the visitor center.

Responsibility: Regional Director, Northeast Region

Attachments:

P.L. 106-131

Pages from the *Congressional Record* from: April 12, 1999, when H.R. 449 was considered and passed by the House of Representatives; and November 19, 1999, when H.R. 449 passed the Senate.

House Report 106-66

Senate Report 106-68