

From: Press (Manchin)

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Subject: MANCHIN, CARDIN, CAPITO, VAN HOLLEN INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO DESIGNATE APPALACHIAN FOREST HERITAGE AREA

UNITED STATES SENATE



NEWS RELEASE

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MANCHIN, CARDIN, CAPITO, VAN HOLLEN INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO DESIGNATE APPALACHIAN FOREST HERITAGE AREA

Legislation will provide a framework to continue to conserve the cultural, natural and historical heritage

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) today introduced the *Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Act of 2017*. This bipartisan legislation will provide a cooperative management framework to West Virginia and Maryland, eighteen counties within those states, all levels of government and the private sector to work collaboratively to conserve the cultural, natural and historical heritage and pursue economic opportunities within the designated Heritage Area.

“This bipartisan measure is an investment in a healthy future for both our children and our growing tourism industry in West Virginia. As the third most forested state in the nation, West Virginians cherish the access we have to the outdoors. We must preserve the rich cultural traditions and natural beauty of this region for the next generation of West Virginians and for visitors from all over the world who visit our great state each year,” **said Senator Manchin.**

“Our Appalachian Forest Heritage Area legislation is designed to recognize the importance of and bring additional economic activity to 18 counties in Western Maryland and West Virginia where people, mountains and forests continually shape each other,” **said Senator Cardin**. “This bipartisan measure will improve the collaboration among the many agencies, governments and citizens who manage, care about and depend upon the Appalachian region. It is a significant step forward in our stewardship of unique natural, historic and cultural resources.”

“West Virginia’s mountainous forest lands are important to our tourism economy and scenic beauty, so it is essential that we designate this heritage area. I am proud to join my colleagues to introduce this measure that will help boost tourism and revenue in West Virginia, and help more people enjoy the natural beauty the Mountain State is known for,” **said Senator Capito**.

“Maryland’s natural treasures are also key cultural and economic assets to our state,” **said Senator Van Hollen**. “This bipartisan legislation will give communities in the Appalachian region of Maryland additional tools to conserve our natural and historical heritage while promoting tourism and job growth.”

National Heritage Area Designation:

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- The National Heritage Area program is a grants and outreach program that is administered by state governments, non-profit organizations or other private corporations. The National Park Service provides an advisory role with limited technical, planning and financial assistance.
- A National Heritage Area designation does not result in additional federal land management programs, regulations or management controls.
- There are currently 49 National Heritage Areas.
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- National Heritage Areas leverage federal funds to create jobs, generate revenue for local governments, and sustain local communities.
- National Heritage Areas return an average of \$5.50 for every \$1.00 of federal investment.

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