

BUFFALO SOLDIERS IN THE NATIONAL PARKS STUDY  
ACT

---

MAY 18, 2010.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of  
the Union and ordered to be printed

---

Mr. RAHALL, from the Committee on Natural Resources,  
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 4491]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 4491) to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 4491 is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

H.R. 4491 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to initiate a study to determine effective ways to commemorate the Buffalo Soldiers and their role in helping to protect, build, and preserve America's national parks, as well as to ascertain the suitability and feasibility of potential historic sites, national landmarks, and a national historic trail related to their work.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, America's Buffalo Soldiers—the all-African American cavalymen of the U.S. Army—rode from the San Francisco Presidio to the foothills of the Sierra

Nevada Mountains, serving as the protectors of several of the country's first national parks. Led by Lt. Colonel Charles Young—the first African American superintendent of Yosemite National Park—these *de facto* rangers built trails, preserved the giant sequoias, and protected the wildlife of Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks from poaching during these critical, formative years.

H.R. 4491 directs the Secretary of the Interior to research the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in protecting these nascent parks and examine, among other things, the possible creation of a National Historic Trail along the route used by these soldiers.

#### COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 4491 was introduced on January 10, 2010 by Representative Jackie Speier (D–CA). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands. On February 25, 2010, the Subcommittee held a hearing on the bill during which the National Park Service testified in favor of the legislation.

On May 5, 2010, the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4491 and the full Natural Resources Committee met to consider the bill. The bill was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by voice vote.

#### COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. Cost of Legislation. Clause 3(d)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. However, clause 3(d)(3)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

2. Congressional Budget Act. As required by clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures.

3. General Performance Goals and Objectives. As required by clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks.

4. Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate. Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

*H.R. 4491—A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks, and for other purposes*

H.R. 4491 would require the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a study of alternatives for honoring the Buffalo Soldiers (members of several African-American regiments within the U.S. Army established after the Civil War). Based on information from the NPS and assuming the availability of appropriated funds, CBO estimates that conducting the study would cost about \$400,000 over the next three years. Enacting H.R. 4491 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

H.R. 4491 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Jeff LaFave. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

EARMARK STATEMENT

H.R. 4491 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill would make no changes in existing law.