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Connect Our Parks Act

Congress: 118 (2023–2025, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Public Lands and Natural Resources

Introduced: Jun 15, 2023

Current Status: Held at the desk.

Latest Action: Held at the desk. (Dec 19, 2024)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/2018>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Barrasso, John [R-WY]

Party: Republican • **State:** WY • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (6 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Hyde-Smith, Cindy [R-MS]	R · MS		Jun 15, 2023
Sen. King, Angus S., Jr. [I-ME]	I · ME		Jun 15, 2023
Sen. Lee, Mike [R-UT]	R · UT		Jun 15, 2023
Sen. Lummis, Cynthia M. [R-WY]	R · WY		Jun 15, 2023
Sen. Wyden, Ron [D-OR]	D · OR		Sep 11, 2023
Sen. Lujan, Ben Ray [D-NM]	D · NM		Sep 12, 2023

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Energy and Natural Resources Committee	Senate	Hearings By (subcommittee)	Jun 21, 2023

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Public Lands and Natural Resources

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
118 HR 6492	Related bill	Jan 4, 2025: Became Public Law No: 118-234.
118 HR 5919	Related bill	Oct 25, 2023: Referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Connect Our Parks Act

This bill requires the National Park Service (NPS) to assess locations within the National Park System with the greatest need for broadband internet or cellular service, and to develop a plan for the placement of broadband and cellular infrastructure in parks.

In assessing where broadband service is most needed, the NPS must consider the current availability of broadband in housing, lodging, administrative facilities, developed campgrounds, and other areas within each park. In assessing where cellular service is most needed, the NPS must consider locations where the availability of cellular service in a developed area of a park would increase public access to emergency services and traveler information or the communications capabilities of NPS employees. The NPS must complete the assessment within one year of the bill's enactment.

Further, within three years of the bill's enactment, the NPS must develop a plan based on the results of the assessment to install broadband and cellular service infrastructure at locations within the National Park System. In developing the plan, the NPS must consult with affected tribes and local stakeholders.

The plan must (1) be technology neutral; (2) provide for infrastructure to be located in previously developed areas or areas zoned for uses that would support infrastructure; and (3) avoid or minimize impacts to cultural and natural resources, the visitor experience, and park viewsheds. The plan must also provide for the use of public-private partnerships for the installation of equipment and provision of broadband or cellular service.

Actions Timeline

- **Dec 19, 2024:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Dec 19, 2024:** Received in the House.
- **Dec 19, 2024:** Held at the desk.
- **Dec 18, 2024:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent.
- **Dec 18, 2024:** Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent. (consideration: CR S7145; text: CR S7148-7149)
- **Jan 9, 2024:** Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Reported by Senator Manchin with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. With written report No. 118-154.
- **Jan 9, 2024:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 306.
- **Sep 21, 2023:** Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.
- **Jun 21, 2023:** Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Senate Subcommittee on National Parks. Hearings held. With printed Hearing: S.Hrg. 118-284.
- **Jun 15, 2023:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jun 15, 2023:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.