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CHIEF OF STAFF

U.S. House of Representatives

Committee on Natural Resources

Washington, DC 20515

Opening Statement of Chairman Doc Hastings Committee on Natural Resources At the

Public Lands and Environmental Regulation Subcommittee Legislative Hearing on H.R. 1208

"Manhattan Project National Historical Park Act" On Friday, April 12, 2013 at 10 am

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Today's hearing is another step forward in the effort to establish a historical park to preserve the story and facilities of the Manhattan Project. This effort consists of many years of careful study and consideration, and even more years of dedicated advocacy by individuals and organizations in communities directly touched by the Manhattan Project. Last June, these years of efforts culminated in the introduction of bipartisan legislation in both the House and Senate to establish a Manhattan Project National Historical Park at Hanford, Washington, Los Alamos, New Mexico and Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

As with hundreds of other bills, this legislation did not advance to become law last Congress. Yet significant progress was made. The House and Senate held back-to-back hearings to hear testimony of support, and the bill was approved by the House Natural Resources Committee and advanced to the full House for consideration. In a vote of the House under the suspension process, a strong majority of the House voted to pass the bill, though it did not receive the super-majority vote of two-thirds needed to send the bill to the Senate under this expedited procedure. We now know that a majority of the House – which includes both a majority of Republicans and Democrats – support establishment of this Historical Park and its passage is now a question of when, not if.

As we begin this new Congress, bipartisan legislation has again been proposed in both the House and Senate. And the Senate is expected to follow today's hearing with its own later this month.

The Representatives and Senators of both parties that are working together on this legislation are very committed to advancing this historical park into law – though even our passion for establishing the park is exceeded by that of the volunteers and local leaders in the three Manhattan Project communities and others across the nation. We were fortunate to have a representative from each of the three communities testify at last year's hearing, and we are fortunate to have similar representation today. There are many historical, economic and tourism development organizations in each of the communities that have helped lead the way in preserving this piece of our nation's history. They are doing a

tremendous job communicating the important positive role this park can play in telling the story of efforts during the Second World War to accomplish an unprecedented, and many thought, impossible, industrial and scientific achievement - to construct a nuclear weapon and counter threats of similar development by Nazi Germany.