



Committee on Natural Resources

U.S. House of Representatives

Chairman Doc Hastings

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CONTACT: [Press Office](#)

202-226-9019

Hastings on Helium Hypocrisy: Senate Should Act Today to Open our National Parks

"Why will the Senate pass and President Obama sign it into law a bill to specifically prevent the closure of the federal helium program, but then refuse to act on a bill to end the closure of over 400 national parks that are visited by millions of Americans?"

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) delivered the following statement (as prepared for delivery) on the House floor calling on the Senate to act on common sense legislation to keep our National Parks open.



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"Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House passed and sent to the Senate a bipartisan bill to keep our National Parks open.

Twenty-three Democrats joined with House Republicans to end the closure of these national treasures. They joined us to unlock the gates and open the doors from Acadia to Yellowstone. They joined us to tear down the barricades erected to block access to open-air DC memorials – memorials that are always open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Senate should act today to pass this bill and send it to President Obama for his signature. It's disappointing to see statements from Senate Democrat leaders dismissing and even ridiculing these common sense steps as "piecemeal." It's even more disappointing to see the President threaten a [veto](#) of the bill to keep the parks open.

Let's not forget that one week ago today, Senate Democrat leader Harry Reid and the entire Senate unanimously approved a bill to keep the Federal Helium Reserve open and operating. Last night, the President finally [signed](#) this bill to prevent a helium shutdown into law. The helium program is part of the Interior Department, just like our national parks.

One has to ask: why will the Senate pass and President Obama sign it into law a bill to specifically prevent the closure of the federal helium program, but then refuse to act on a bill to end the closure of over 400 national parks that are visited by millions of Americans?

The contradictions in their words and actions are glaring. Such political posturing is not just illogical and hypocritical, but the true result punishes the American people.

This does not need to happen and should not happen. And I urge Senate Democrats and the President to stop going out of their way to make the government shutdown as painful as possible. I urge them to come to the table and negotiate an end to the shutdown. And to act today to take the reasonable and responsible step of passing the bill to open our parks and memorials to America's veterans, families and citizens."

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