



OUTDOORS FOR ALL ACT (S. 2887, H.R. 5413)

Background

Parks and outdoor recreation spaces are essential and adaptable infrastructure that provide communities a myriad of environmental, public health, economic, social, and other benefits. Parks and outdoor recreation spaces make communities resilient in the face of natural disasters and climate change. Trees and vegetation in parks help reduce air pollution directly by removing pollutants and reducing air temperature. Parks and outdoor green spaces also help manage stormwater and drinking water supplies and increase biodiversity—all of which are in jeopardy due to our changing climate.

Nearly 100 million people nationwide do not live within a half-mile from a park, with most underserved communities having access to an average of 44 percent less park acreage. Consistent exclusions of underserved communities from adequate outdoor recreation space have harmful effects on households and the public, impacting air quality and other environmental issues, physical and mental health, economic growth and development, and more.

Landscape architects are the leading professionals in planning and designing community parks and are well-suited to access funding through the Outdoors for All Act to create park projects that will help bridge the gap in underserved communities nationwide.

Solution

To expand parks and other outdoor recreational opportunities in urban and low-income communities across the nation, Senators Alex Padilla (CA) and Susan Collins (ME) introduced S. 2887 and Representatives Nanette Diaz Barragan (CA) and Michael Turner (OH) introduced H.R. 5413, the Outdoors for All Act.

This legislation seeks to address the lack of adequate recreation space in underserved communities by codifying and establishing a dedicated source of funding for the existing Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program of the National Park Service. Project funding may be used for new parks, the renovation of existing recreation facilities, and the development of infrastructure that supports outdoor education and public land volunteerism. Priority will be given to projects that take place within underserved communities, empower the youth in these communities, and significantly enhance access to parks and recreational opportunities.

Request

The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) believes Congress must act to expand parks and other outdoor recreational opportunities in underserved communities across the nation. We ask that you support the Outdoors for All Act (S. 2887 or H.R. 5413), and cosponsor this legislation if you have not already done so.