

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH PRENDERGAST, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

Honorable chairman and members of the subcommittee, my name is Joseph Prendergast, and I am executive vice president of the National Recreation and Park Association. This organization came into being on January 1, 1966, after six national recreation and park organizations merged into a single organization to serve the people of the United States in their pursuit of better park and recreation facilities and programs and to help provide more wholesome and meaningful leisure time activities for the American people. The organizations that now comprise the National Recreation and Park Association formerly were the National Recreation Association, American Institute of Park Executives, American Recreation Society, National Conference on State Parks, National Association of State Park Directors, and the American Association for Zoological Parks and Aquariums.

Laurance S. Rockefeller is president of this organization and its board of trustees is made up of distinguished lay and professional leaders from all parts of the Nation. Over 600 outstanding parks and recreation leaders serve on its various national and district advisory committees. Some 2,500 national, State, and local parks and recreation agencies, both public and private, are service affiliates of the association and over 7,000 professional recreation leaders are members of its professional division.

We would like to testify today on behalf of H.R. 13790 (on financial and other aid to encourage and assist in the preservation and maintenance of historic structures) and H.R. 13792 (on the promotion and coordination of historic preservation activities of the Federal, State, and local governments, other public bodies, and private organizations and individuals).

The National Recreation and Park Association is pleased that the Federal Government is showing concern and is seeking legislation to preserve one of our Nation's richest heritages—the perpetuation of our historic structures and landmarks. It is our moral obligation to insure that future generations can be inspired and stimulated by being able to identify with the lives of our famous personages and the great moments in history.

Our historical structures are being destroyed at an alarming rate. They are either being razed or abandoned through sheer neglect. We must not allow this trend to continue. It is imperative that we act now before it is too late.

H.R. 13790, by providing financial assistance for acquisition and rehabilitation of historic structures, will provide the impetus to get this worthwhile movement into high gear. This bill also provides for the establishment of a National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to carry out the policies of the act. We are pleased to see that representation on the council will include elected officials at the local and State levels by the appointment of two mayors, one county official, and a representative of each State's Governor. This action will generate interest at the grass roots level where programs to be successful must receive their support.

H.R. 13792 provides for assistance and cooperation with State and local governments for historic preservation of activities. The compilation of a national register of historical sites with pertinent inventories prepared for State and local governments will be of infinite value in accounting for and instituting the action necessary to safeguard our historical legacies.

The National Recreation and Park Association enthusiastically supports both of these bills, and urges their prompt enactment.

STATEMENT BY JOHN W. EDELMAN, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SENIOR CITIZENS, IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 9256

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, the National Council of Senior Citizens is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of independent senior citizen clubs and individuals located in all States.

In the few years since it was first set up in August 1961 to spearhead widespread public support for medicare, it has become the largest—and perhaps one of the most effective—national organizations for older people ever seen in America. Our more than 2,000 affiliated clubs include a combined membership of over 2 million elderly people linked through statewide and area or community councils.