

D.C. It has been reviewed by Mr. Stanley A. Murray, chairman of the Appalachian Trail Conference. He regrets that he is not able to be here in person.

Those of us who have been deeply concerned with keeping the Appalachian Trail as a continuous footpath of 2,000 miles along the mountain ridges between Maine and Georgia are deeply concerned over the changing patterns of land use and recognize the need for Federal participation in its protection. We are well aware of the need to acquire property as quickly as possible after congressional or State authorization for park or recreation purposes has been given. As a group of citizens who have tried to do for ourselves, we have first-hand experience in what happens to land values when there is any discussion of purchase by a private agency such as the nature conservancy or a land trust. It is obvious that there is a great need to have adequate funds available to purchase recreation lands before they are priced out of reach or are altered for other uses to the point where they are too costly or no longer are in a condition to serve their recreational potential.

The Trails Conference wishes to offer specific comments upon the three major objectives of S. 1401.

1. It will add for a limited time additional sources of revenue to the land and water conservation fund. This is urgently needed.

2. It will authorize the head of the department concerned to contract, under certain restrictions, for the acquisition of property within authorized areas in advance of actual appropriation of moneys from the land and water conservation fund for such acquisition.

Such authority is in keeping with sound business practice and will help to control the spiral of price demands by landowners. This can mean the difference between acquisition or loss of lands for recreational purposes.

3. It will authorize a lease-back and sell-back land management program for the property acquired for the national park system.

Some of us have reservations about this proposal as it is written. While all possible ways and means of acquiring lands for public purposes should be employed, this authority might under some circumstances become a disservice. If it means the further opening of parks and other recreational areas for concession operators, worthy as some may be, we fear it. Further study of this provision is respectfully urged.

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you and to be heard.

Mr. ELLIS. I am Spencer Ellis, director, Maryland Department of Forests and Parks. With your pleasure, I will submit my statement for the record.

Senator BURDICK. It will be made a part of the record, without objection.

STATEMENT OF SPENCER P. ELLIS, DIRECTOR, MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF FORESTS AND PARKS

Mr. ELLIS. I endorse S. 1401, a bill to increase the revenue of the land and water conservation fund, or any other bill designed to increase the source of funds available to the States for the acquisition and development of recreation areas.