

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 25, 2020

Hon. James Inhofe, Chairman
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Adam Smith, Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Jack Reed, Ranking Member
Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Mac Thornberry, Ranking Member
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Inhofe, Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Reed, and Ranking Member Thornberry:


During conference committee consideration of the Fiscal Year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) , we respectfully request that you support Section 626 of the House-passed bill that would make the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass Program free for Gold Star Families. This language is identical to that of the bipartisan and bicameral *Gold Star Families Parks Pass Act (H.R. 5998/S. 3366)*, which has garnered the support of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Sons and Daughters in Touch: America's Gold Star Children from the Vietnam War, and numerous environmental organizations.

The pass covers entrance fees at national parks and national wildlife refuges as well as standard amenity fees at national forests and grasslands, and at lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation. Currently, the pass is free for individuals with disabilities, service volunteers, and members of the military.

America's Gold Star Families have made unimaginable sacrifices for the safety of our country, and we should do everything possible to help them heal. Our national parks are among America's greatest treasures, inspiring awe and providing space for reflection. Any family who has lost a loved one in defense of the United States should be able to access these treasures free of charge.

Free access to our national parks and public lands is a small but meaningful way for our country to thank our Gold Star Families. Again, we strongly urge you to include Section 626 in the final, conferenced Fiscal Year 2021 NDAA.

Sincerely,



Jared Golden
Member of Congress



Lamar Alexander
United States Senator

/s/

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Brian Mast
Member of Congress



Max Rose
Member of Congress



David Trone
Member of Congress



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



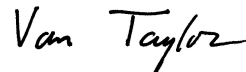
Steve Daines
United States Senator



Conor Lamb
Member of Congress



Josh Harder
Member of Congress



Van Taylor
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

A stylized, handwritten signature of Dean Phillips, featuring a large, bold 'D' followed by a horizontal line.

Dean Phillips
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature of Don Bacon, written in a cursive style.

Don Bacon
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature of Mike Levin, written in a cursive style.

Mike Levin
Member of Congress