

**UNITED STATES CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY
ACT OF 2009 -- (House of Representatives - September 29, 2009)**

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Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 685) to require a study of the feasibility of establishing the United States Civil Rights Trail System, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 685

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "United States Civil Rights Trail Special Resource Study Act of 2009".

**SEC. 2. SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY REGARDING PROPOSED
UNITED STATES CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL.**

(a) *Study Required.*--The Secretary of the Interior shall conduct a special resource study for the purpose of evaluating a range of alternatives for protecting and interpreting sites associated with the struggle for civil rights in the United States, including alternatives for potential addition of some or all of the sites to the National Trails System.

(b) *Consultation.*--The Secretary shall conduct the special resource study in consultation with appropriate Federal, State, county, and local governmental entities.

(c) *Study Requirements.*--The Secretary shall conduct the study required under subsection (a) in accordance with section 8(c) of Public Law 91-383 (16 U.S.C. 1a-5(c)) and section 5(b) of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1244(b)), as appropriate.

(d) *Study Objectives.*--In conducting the special resource study, the Secretary shall evaluate alternatives for achieving the following objectives:

(1) Identifying the resources and historic themes associated with the movement to secure racial equality in the United States for African Americans that, focusing on the period from 1954 through 1968, challenged the practice of racial segregation in the Nation and achieved equal rights for all American citizens.

(2) Making a review of existing studies and reports, such as the Civil Rights Framework Study, to complement and not duplicate other studies of the historical importance of the civil rights movements that may be underway or undertaken.

(3) Establishing connections with agencies, organizations, and partnerships already engaged in the preservation and interpretation of various trails and sites dealing with the civil rights movement.

(4) Protecting historically significant landscapes, districts, sites, and structures.

(5) Identifying alternatives for preservation and interpretation of the sites by the National Park Service, other Federal, State, or local governmental entities, or private and nonprofit organizations, including the potential inclusion of some or all of the sites in a National Civil Rights Trail.

(6) Identifying cost estimates for any necessary acquisition, development, interpretation, operation, and maintenance associated with the alternatives developed under the special resource study.

(e) *Report.*--Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report containing the results of the study conducted under subsection (c) and any recommendations of the Secretary with respect to the route.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. *Bordallo*) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. *Wittman*) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Guam.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Guam?

There was no objection.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We must never forget the struggle for racial equality that spanned our Nation in the 1950s and the 1960s nor the people who waged that fight to obtain basic civil rights for all Americans.

The many sites linked to the civil rights movement together tell the story of how it profoundly transformed our history.

H.R. 685, as amended, authorizes the National Park Service to complete a Special Resource Study to analyze alternatives and make recommendations for the preservation and the interpretation of these multiple sites, including a possible national Civil Rights Trail linking the sites with common maps, signs, and educational material.

Mr. Speaker, we commend our distinguished colleague, Representative **WILLIAM LACY CLAY**, for his vision and dedication to this legislation. We support passage of H.R. 685 and urge its adoption by the House today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 685 has been adequately explained by chairwoman **BORDALLO**, and we thank her for that effort.

We support the legislation with the understanding that the original intent of the bill is being preserved. The National Park Service proposed changes that would have prevented the program from focusing on the history of the movement to overcome slavery and racial discrimination and instead would have directed it to include other political causes, and we appreciate that change.

We agree with the intent of the bill's sponsor, Mr. *Clay*, that the trail system tells the story of the struggle for civil rights based on racial equality.

We thank Mr. *Clay* for his leadership and efforts on those lines and in bringing this bill forward.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of this legislation, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. *Clay*).

Mr. CLAY. First of all, I thank the chairwoman, Ms. *Bordallo*, as well as the ranking member, Mr. *Wittman*, for their assistance on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, as the sponsor of this legislation, along with Congressman **ZACH WAMP** of Tennessee, I am pleased to present H.R. 685 for consideration by

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the House today. I also want to thank my good friend, chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands, **RAÚL GRIJALVA**, for guiding this legislation through the committee process.

This legislation will fully recognize the remarkable American story of the struggle for civil rights. That ongoing journey stretches across three centuries through multiple generations and touches every American.

The United States Civil Rights Trail Special Resource Study Act of 2009 would recognize those brave souls who fought to make the promises enshrined in our Constitution ring true. In many places across this Nation and for far too long, that story is still incomplete and remains largely untold.

H.R. 685 would authorize a study by the Secretary of the Interior to determine the feasibility of establishing a national trail system marking the geographic location of historically significant events related to the fight for racial equality in the United States.

[Time: 14:15]

The American civil rights movement challenged the practice of racial segregation in the Nation and achieved equal rights for all American citizens. It is my hope that this bill and the resulting historic civil rights trails will tell the full and sometimes painful story of the struggle for civil rights. The knowledge and understanding gained from the trails will provide this generation and those who follow us with tremendous educational opportunities.

Let me close by urging all of my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I again urge Members to support this very important piece of legislation.

- [Begin Insert]

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the United States Civil Rights Trail System Act of 2009. I would like to commend my colleagues and friends, Congressman **WILLIAM LACY CLAY** and Congressman **ZACH WAMP** for championing this important legislation.

The fight for civil rights was one of the most significant social and cultural movements in our nation's history. Because of the hundreds and thousands of ordinary people with extraordinary vision who participated in the Civil Rights Movement, we witnessed a nonviolent revolution under the rule of law, a revolution of values and ideas that changed this nation forever. We must ensure that the next generation, and the current generation, learn and do not forget the story of the Civil Rights Movement and the ideals that it strove to achieve. This proposed system of trails, would mark the geographic locations in the United States of historically significant events tied to the struggles for racial equality. I saw firsthand the struggle and the pains that ordinary citizens endured at many of these sites to help break down the walls of segregation and their efforts must be memorialized and never forgotten. It is my hope, and belief, that this trail system will help to educate and inspire the next generation of Civil Rights leaders who still have many fights ahead of them. This act will help to preserve and protect the legacy and the story of the Movement for future generations and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 685, the United States Civil Rights Trail Act. I joined with my colleague, Mr. **CLAY**, to introduce this legislation.

From 1954 through 1968, many significant events of the Civil Rights Movement took place in the United States. On February 1, 1960, in Greensboro, North Carolina, four courageous African-American students from the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College took their seats at the lunch counter of the F. W. Woolworth Company, but the store refused to serve them at the counter. One of the students stated that, ``We believe, since we buy books and papers in other parts of the store, we should get

served in this part." Over the next several days, they sat peacefully at the lunch counter in quiet protest, and close to a hundred others joined them. Soon, thousands across the South joined the students' protest and conducted lunch counter sit-ins of their own.

While many may only think of events that occurred in southern and eastern States, there were important events in other parts of the country where individuals overcame injustice. In Washington, D.C., in 1961, 13 individuals of different races, known as the Freedom Riders, boarded a bus bound for New Orleans, Louisiana, in an attempt to desegregate places of public accommodations. Their courage and sacrifice led to the desegregation of all public places under Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. To learn more about other events, the Civil Rights Trail System Act would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the feasibility of establishing a national trail system to mark locations in the United States (including its territories) of historically significant events related to the struggle for racial equality.

With this study and the help of an advisory committee of experts in historic preservation and African-American history, the Secretary of the Interior would provide information about the many people and places that played such an important role in the Civil Rights Movement for all Americans, and everyone would have the opportunity to stand and breathe the air where history was made. The Secretary would first establish at least six national trails in States where significant civil rights events occurred, with other trails sure to follow as documentation is available.

This legislation provides the U.S. Congress an opportunity to honor those who were a part of a movement that ensured that everyone was created equal and that everyone had the freedom to achieve the American dream. The trail system would serve as a marker for how far our country has come and would remain for future generations so that our history is accurate and instructive on all that is necessary for justice and equality to reign down on our land.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 685, the United States Civil Rights Trail System Act of 2009. This legislation would direct the Archivist of the United States to conduct a study of the feasibility of establishing the United States Civil Rights Trail System. The State of Georgia is home to numerous historic civil rights landmarks including Albany, Georgia, home to the Albany Movement, which was led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Savannah, Georgia, which desegregated public and private facilities eight months ahead of federal civil rights

legislation. Savannah was once described as the most desegregated city south of the Mason-Dixon Line. I strongly support H.R. 685 and I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

H.R. 685 simply seeks to unify our nation's civil rights landmarks through maps and other resources. This will facilitate remembrance of the struggles for civil rights based on racial equality as well as provide information about the ordinary individuals, some of whom gave up their lives, for the right to equal rights. The civil rights landmarks highlighted in this trail signify to a period that many here today are too young to remember, and would be held as a tribute to a historic era. By chronicling such historic civil rights landmarks including the Montgomery Bus Boycotts, the Greensboro sit-in, and the historic marches from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, we can bring true recognition to the numerous historical sites that led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It is my hope that in the future, we can truly create equality for all. This is an important issue and I applaud the efforts of this Congress to emphasize the importance of civil rights landmarks around the country.

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Ms. BORDALLO. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. *Bordallo*) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 685, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title was amended so as to read: ``A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study regarding the proposed United States Civil Rights Trail, and for other purposes.''

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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