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August 20, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Minority Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader Hoyer, and Minority Whip Scalise:

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) urges you to bring H.R. 1225, the Restore Our Parks and Public Lands Act, to the House floor for a vote upon Congress' return to session next month. This bill would establish a federal fund to reduce the \$12 billion National Park Service (NPS) deferred maintenance infrastructure backlog by collecting up to 50 percent of unobligated, existing revenues the government collects in royalties from onshore, offshore, and renewable energy operations.

Americans are visiting our nation's national parks at record numbers. In 2018 alone, there were 318.2 million recreation visits – the third highest since NPS began keeping records at the turn of the 20th century. These visitors spent \$20.2 billion in gateway communities, generating \$40.1 billion to the nation's economy and supporting 329,000 jobs. Despite the growing popularity of national parks, funding for our nation's public parks infrastructure is woefully inadequate. The NPS' deferred maintenance backlog of nearly \$12 billion includes \$6 billion for roads, bridges, tunnels, and parking lots and \$6 billion for non-transportation related projects such as eroding trails, visitor facilities, and water and electrical systems. In fact, the NPS manages more than 75,000 constructed assets, and over 41,000 of them – more than half – are in need of repair. It comes as no surprise, then, that ASCE's *2017 Infrastructure Report Card* gave our nation's public parks a grade of "D+."

Our national parks remain a bedrock of American society. As President Theodore Roosevelt said, "The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased and not impaired in value."

The Restore Our Parks and Public Lands Act is a critical investment measure that will help raise our nation's public parks "D+" grade and re-establish our nation's world-class infrastructure. ASCE urges you to quickly bring this bipartisan bill to the floor for a vote. We thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Emily Feenstra

Managing Director of Government Relations and Infrastructure Initiatives