

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL A. CALDWELL, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, CONCERNING S. 3474, TO REDESIGNATE THE HULLS COVE VISITOR CENTER AT ACADIA NATIONAL PARK AS THE “GEORGE J. MITCHELL, JR. VISITOR CENTER”.

May 15, 2024

Chairman King, Ranking Member Daines, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior’s views on S. 3474, to redesignate the Hulls Cove Visitor Center at Acadia National Park as the “George J. Mitchell, Jr. Visitor Center”.

The Hulls Cove Visitor Center is located off Route 3 in Bar Harbor, Maine, and serves as the main visitor contact station for Acadia National Park (the park). The area is a “first stop” for visitors to learn about the park, plan their visit, and ride the Island Explorer bus.

Senator George J. Mitchell, Jr. served the state of Maine in the U.S. Senate from 1980 to 1995, during which time he championed bills such as Public Law 99-420, which established a permanent boundary for the park, and Public Law 97-335, which included the iconic lands of Isle au Haut within the park’s boundary in 1982.

S. 3474 would designate Hulls Cove Visitor Center or any successor visitor center that serves as the principal visitor center for the park as the “George J. Mitchell, Jr. Visitor Center.” The NPS generally discourages the naming of park features except when there is a compelling justification and at least five years have elapsed since the death of the person. However, we recognize that Congress may also specifically authorize the placement of such recognition. In this instance, the Department defers to Congress and does not object to S. 3474.

Chairman King, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.