

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTINA GOLDFUSS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR,  
CONGRESSIONAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
NATIONAL PARKS, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES,  
CONCERNING S. 2104, TO REQUIRE THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL PARK  
SERVICE TO REFUND TO STATES ALL STATE FUNDS THAT WERE USED TO  
REOPEN AND TEMPORARILY OPERATE A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK  
SYSTEM DURING THE OCTOBER 2013 SHUTDOWN**

**July 23, 2014**

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to provide the Department of the Interior's views on S. 2104, a bill to require the Director of the National Park Service to refund to States all State funds that were used to reopen and temporarily operate a unit of the National Park System during the October 2013 shutdown.

S. 2104 requires the Director of the National Park Service to reimburse each State that provided funds to open and temporarily operate a unit (or units) of the National Park System in October 2013, when there was a lapse in appropriations for most Federal government activities. The bill specifies that the reimbursement shall be carried out using funds appropriated for the National Park Service after enactment of this legislation. We estimate that the cost of reimbursing the States would be approximately \$2 million.

From October 1 through October 16, 2013, the National Park Service, along with other bureaus and offices of the Department of the Interior, implemented a shutdown of our activities due to a lapse in appropriations. Under the closure determination and notice issued by the Director of the National Park Service, and consistent with applicable law, the National Park Service closed and secured all 401 national parks across the country, suspended all activities, and furloughed more than 20,000 National Park Service employees.

In response to the economic impacts that the park closures were having on many communities and local businesses, as the shutdown entered a second week, Secretary Jewell announced that the Department would consider agreements with Governors who indicated an interest and ability to fully fund National Park Service personnel to reopen specified national parks in their States. Six States – Arizona, Colorado, New York, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Utah – signed donation agreements with the Department to open a total of 13 park units that are all significant contributors to tourism in the States where they are located. State donations under these agreements totaled approximately \$3.6 million. Once these agreements were signed and the funds were transferred, the National Park Service reopened the national parks in accordance with the specific agreements.

Under the terms of the agreements, the States donated to the National Park Service lump sum payments in advance to cover the cost of operating the parks for a specific number of days. Further, these agreements stipulated that funds donated and used to re-open the parks could not be returned to the States. The employees who returned to work in these parks during the

shutdown were paid for these days out of the funds donated by the States. When Congress passed a continuing resolution providing appropriations for the first three and a half months of FY 2014 on October 16, 2013, the National Park Service was able to resume operations on October 17, 2013, and stop charging employee time against the funds that had been donated by the States.

Once the shutdown ended, the National Park Service immediately began the process of reimbursing the six States for the portion of donated funding that was not expended to operate the parks, which totaled approximately \$1.6 million. However, the National Park Service does not have the authority to reimburse States for the portion of funding that was expended (approximately \$2 million); an act of Congress is needed for that. S. 2104 would provide that authority. We would like to point out that, as written, the source of funds for repayment will be derived from future appropriations, not from funds received by the parks in FY14.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony, and I would be happy to answer any questions you or other members of the subcommittee may have.