**It’s Time to Fix Our Parks**

America’s national parks are national treasures. Visitors value these sites that provide recreational opportunities, commemorate our history and preserve our country’s wide variety of natural wonders—just as the U.S. government intended over 100 years ago, when they founded the National Park Service (NPS).

Unfortunately, the NPS is entering its second century saddled with a long repair list. Items needing attention include crumbling roads and bridges, deteriorating historic buildings and monuments, and even critical water, sewer and electrical system failures. This maintenance backlog has grown to a staggering $11.6 billion, and includes most of the 400-plus NPS sites.

NPS is struggling to keep pace with necessary maintenance, even as its customers are visiting record numbers—national parks and monuments saw more than 330 million visits in 2016 alone. We play an important role in making that experience great by [HOW YOUR COMPANY HELPS NPS TOURISTS GET TO/ENJOY PARKS]. Once visitors enter those park gates, they should experience the best our country can offer. They should not be faced with impassible trails, run-down bathrooms and campgrounds, closed historic buildings, and malfunctioning electrical and water systems, just because the necessary dollars have not been allocated for upkeep.

Keeping “America’s best idea” up to date isn’t just an issue of optics—national parks and monuments have a major fiscal impact. Last year, visitors to NPS sites spent an estimated $18.2 billion. Whether it was on lodging, food, campsite fees, supplies or souvenirs, this money was spent particularly in the more remote “gateway” regions within 60 miles of U.S. national parks and monuments, supporting 306,000 jobs, and generating nearly $36 billion for the U.S economy. In other words, national parks are crucial for creating and sustaining American jobs—and those jobs are at risk if we let our national parks fall into disrepair.

Fortunately, there is something our lawmakers can do now to fix our parks. Several members of Congress are supporting the National Park Service Legacy Act, a bipartisan piece of legislation that would direct dedicated annual federal funding to NPS maintenance projects.

We urge lawmakers to protect our national treasures by enacting this legislation. Providing investment in infrastructure will support the communities and businesses that depend on the billions of tourism dollars that follow park visitors, and preserve these parks for future generations.