



June 25, 2012

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
304 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: Testimony in Support of S. 3300, the Manhattan Project
National Historical Park Act**

Dear Chairman Bingaman:

On behalf of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and the more than 600,000 members and supporters we have nationwide, I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on S. 3300, a bill to establish the Manhattan Project National Historical Park.

NPCA supports this legislation, which will establish a national historical park with sites in New Mexico, Tennessee, and Washington to preserve, interpret and make accessible buildings, locations, and artifacts related to the development of the atomic bomb. In addition, this park will provide the unique opportunity to improve public understanding of the Manhattan Project, the legacy of the United States of America's splitting of the atom - including the devastation caused by the atomic bombs used to attack Japan,

the role this decision played in bringing an end to World War II, and the impact the harnessing of the atom has had on our country and the world.

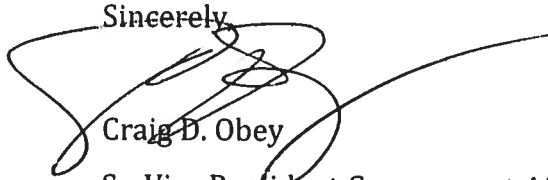
The development of the atomic bomb is an American story of ingenuity and scientific discovery, an achievement that some have called “the single most significant event of the 20th century.” The splitting of the atom has led to new advancements in medicine and physics, yet it also produced grave moral questions and decisions with enormous human and environmental costs. As such, we support your effort, through S. 3300, to call for the National Park Service to interpret both the Manhattan Project and the full measure of its legacy.

Our National Park System may be unique in the world in that it contains some of our country’s most special places and commemorates some of our crowning achievements. Yet, it also memorializes and commemorates some of our most controversial and difficult events, allowing future generations to learn from past experience.

For these reasons, the Manhattan Project National Historical Park would make an excellent addition to our nation’s park system. The National Parks Second Century Commission recommended creating parks that reflect the diversity of the American experience as the National Park Service approaches its 100th birthday in 2016 and beyond. The Manhattan Project’s multifaceted story embraces aspects of our nation’s scientific, industrial, military, economic, social, moral and cultural history, and merits inclusion in our national storybook. A strong showing of Americans from across the country support such a site, according to the National Park Service Special Resource study, which says, “Public response to the study was overwhelmingly in favor of a national park unit...”

NPCA and our more than 600,000 members and supporters encourage the Senate to pass S. 3300, to preserve and protect the historic Manhattan Project sites deemed nationally significant by the National Park Service, deepen public understanding of the role our nation played in ushering in of the atomic age, and educate future generations about the awesome power, consequences and moral responsibility wrought through this legacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig D. Obey', is written over the word 'Sincerely,'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Craig D. Obey

Sr. Vice President Government Affairs