



## SHEET METAL AND AIR CONDITIONING CONTRACTORS' NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

June 2, 2020

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

### **RE: Support Bipartisan (Gardner / Manchin) S. 3422, The Great American Outdoors Act**

Dear Senator:

The Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association (SMACNA) is supported by more than 3,500 construction corporation members engaged in industrial, commercial, residential, architectural and specialty sheet metal and air conditioning construction throughout the United States. Like so many other U.S. employers, they have been significantly impacted by the novel coronavirus outbreak. Our membership association remains committed to completing essential contracting industry services, assisting our contractor members in advancing critical infrastructure projects and carrying out vital construction activities that provide work opportunities for skilled craftworkers nationwide.

As our Nation works to address this public health and economic crisis, we are endorsing and **asking your support for S. 3422, The Great American Outdoors Act, introduced by Senators Gardner (R-CO) and Manchin (D-WV) and a group of 58 bipartisan Senators. S. 3422** would cut the National Park Service's (NPS) \$12 billion repair backlog in half, address maintenance needs at other public land agencies, and provide dedicated annual funding to the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Administration has indicated support for this legislation and will sign it into law if it passes Congress. SMACNA especially supports the initiative's vast list of targeted investments in infrastructure repair and construction. The top four reasons why Congress should pass the Great American Outdoors Act (S. 3422) to help restore national parks:

- Priority, long overdue infrastructure repairs would be made first. This bill would direct up to \$6.65 billion over five years to address long overdue priority maintenance needs in the National Park System. An additional \$3 billion would be available to address deferred maintenance in national forests, wildlife refuges, Bureau of Land Management lands, and Bureau of Indian Education schools. Under this legislation, the repairs would be financed by mineral revenues from energy development on federal lands and waters, under a system that has been in place for decades.

- Communities across the country would also benefit. NPS maintains more than 400 sites across the country and directing funds to address the maintenance backlog would help parks in every region. National parks are proven economic engines that bring over \$18 billion each year in direct spending to communities, along with more than 325,000 jobs and tax revenue. Infrastructure maintenance will also help generate additional jobs.
- Americans support fixing our parks. The desire to restore our NPS sites is popular with American voters. A 2019 poll found 82 percent of those polled support restoring parks.
- NPS visitation is on the rise. The NPS reports that for the fifth year in a row that visits topped 300 million. Therefore, it is imperative that NPS repair and update deteriorating roads, trails, campgrounds, bathrooms, historic buildings, and other vital infrastructure.

The construction industry builds and maintains critical infrastructure, including vital energy and communication systems, roads and bridges, and social infrastructure, including police, fire, and healthcare facilities. SMACNA's membership encourages your expedited efforts to **pass S. 3422** to ensure economic stability as well as the infrastructure quality of National Park Service, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management facilities and the Bureau of Indian Education buildings. Our citizens visiting and working in these facilities deserve no less.

**We urge your support and co-sponsorship of this vitally important bill, S. 3522**, and ask that it be passed immediately and/or added to any of the forthcoming infrastructure and/or PPP-related reform legislative packages expected in the coming days.

Sincerely,



Stanley E. Kolbe, Jr.  
Director, Legislative and Political Affairs

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