

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1902**

May 13, 2016

The Honorable Rob Bishop  
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Bishop,

I respectfully request that the House Natural Resources Committee hold an official congressional field hearing in Maine's Katahdin Region. I hope this opportunity would allow you and your colleagues on both sides of the aisle to tour the area and hear directly from local residents, businesses and officials on the prospect of a unilateral designation of a national monument by the White House in Maine's North Woods.

For several years now, there have been strong efforts by a land owner to provide land to the National Park Service for purposes of creating a national park and national recreation area in Maine's North Woods. This proposal has been met with strong resistance from local residents, businesses, and officials.

Last spring, members of the Maine Congressional Delegation told the land owner that they could not endorse a national park proposal without a clear showing of local support for the idea. A few months later, two towns bordering the proposed national park held non-binding referendum votes. The official results in both votes demonstrated that more than 70% of the local residents opposed the creation of a national park. These landslide votes in opposition are especially noteworthy when considering that special interest groups in support of a national park engineered a massive and expensive strategic marketing campaign to gain support for the proposal, including radio air time, television advertisements, and bright, colorful direct mailers.

The local votes confirmed for me that I could not endorse such a proposal at that time. A few months later, I learned that the land owner planned to exploit their close relationship with the White House and the National Park Service to urge the President to bypass Congress and designate a national monument in the Katahdin Region. Since that time, it has become all but certain that the land owner and its expensive Washington lobbyists are working closely with the White House to make such a designation, despite the strong opposition on the ground in Maine.

In March, the Maine Legislature passed bipartisan legislation stating that it does not give its consent to the federal government acquiring land in Maine for the purpose of creating a national monument through unilateral decree. Maine's Governor Paul LePage then signed that bill into law. Then, just two weeks ago, a third border town, Patten, held a non-binding referendum vote

that rejected the national monument proposal by 70%. Yet, the White House and National Park Service seem determined to move forward with this proposal. I fear that the strong concerns from these local constituents that I represent from the Katahdin Region are being ignored outright by the Obama Administration in this process. In addition, the White House, National Park Service and special interest groups—all with an agenda that ignores the will of the local residents-- are misrepresenting the Katahdin Region, its people, and withholding key facts from the general public.

As you know, President Obama has designated more land as national monuments than any other president in our Nation's history, despite oftentimes strong local opposition and a growing maintenance backlog of nearly \$12 billion at existing national park units, including \$68 million at Maine's prized gem, Acadia National Park. The threat of President Obama's unilateral designation of a national monument in our North Woods—with complete disregard for the concerns of my local constituents—has reached a point where Congress must take action and I need your help.

I hope that you and your colleagues on the House Committee on Natural Resources understand the strong concerns of my constituents in our Katahdin Region and will be able to act promptly to ensure that their voices are heard. It would be my pleasure to host you in the Great State of Maine.

Sincerely,



Bruce Poliquin  
Member of Congress