



NEWS FROM U.S. SENATOR FOR WEST VIRGINIA

# Joe Manchin III

**From:** Press (Manchin)

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**Subject:** MANCHIN, MIKULSKI, CARDIN, CAPITO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO DESIGNATE APPALACHIAN FOREST HERITAGE AREA

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## MANCHIN, MIKULSKI, CARDIN, CAPITO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO DESIGNATE APPALACHIAN FOREST HERITAGE AREA

*Legislation will provide a framework to continue to conserve the cultural, natural and historical heritage*

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Ben Cardin (D-MD), and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) today introduced the *Appalachian Forest National Heritage*

*Area Act of 2016*. This bipartisan legislation will provide a cooperative management framework to Maryland and West Virginia, eighteen counties within those states, all levels of government and the private sector to work collaboratively to conserve the cultural, natural and historical heritage and pursue economic opportunities within the designated Heritage Area.

“West Virginia is the third most forested state in the nation and West Virginians cherish the access we have to the outdoors,” **said Senator Manchin**. “We must preserve the rich cultural traditions and natural beauty of this region for the next generation of West Virginians and for visitors from all over the world who visit our great state each year. This bipartisan measure is an investment in a healthy future for both our children and our growing tourism industry.”

“Strengthening the tourism economy of Western Maryland is a smart investment that will continue to draw in new visitors, new jobs and economic development to the region,” **said Senator Mikulski**. “Maryland is a state rich in history and culture with many unique treasures. By supporting National Heritage Areas, we will honor Maryland’s key role in American

history for future generations while encouraging heritage tourists to enjoy the state's terrific combination of natural beauty.”

“When we closely explore the forested areas of the Western Maryland highlands, we find even more than the wildlife, canopies and creeks that spring forth from some of the most diverse and ancient woods on our continent. We also find an understory dotted with artists, makers, musicians and craftspeople, with both deep roots and a fascinating history running throughout the landscape,” **said Senator Cardin**, a senior member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. “Helping ensure that people nationwide have a better chance to learn about, visit and understand the significance of this irreplaceable region is the reason I strongly support the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Act and will continue to fight for its passage in Congress.”

“Preserving West Virginia’s natural beauty and rich cultural heritage also has significant benefits for our economy. By designating the Appalachian Forest Heritage Area as a National Heritage Area, our state will experience increased tourism, revenue and economic opportunities. I am proud to join with my colleagues to support this designation,” **said Senator Capito**.

#### **National Heritage Area Designation:**

- The National Heritage Area program is a grants and outreach program that is administered by state governments, non-profit organizations or other private corporations. The National Park Service provides an advisory role with limited technical, planning and financial assistance.
- A National Heritage Area designation does not result in additional federal land management programs, regulations or management controls.
- There are currently 49 National Heritage Areas.
- National Heritage Areas leverage federal funds to create jobs, generate revenue for local governments, and sustain local communities.
- National Heritage Areas return an average of \$5.50 for every \$1.00 of federal investment.