

COLTSVILLE STUDY ACT MOVES FORWARD IN CONGRESS

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House Resources Committee Passes Legislation

WASHINGTON, D.C.- Legislation that directs the National Park Service to complete a study exploring the possibility of making the Coltsville area of Hartford part of the National Park system is now one step closer to becoming law. The House Resources Committee today passed the Senate-version of the legislation, S. 233, which must now be passed by the full House of Representatives before it can move to the President's desk to be signed into law. Senators Christopher J. Dodd and Joseph I. Lieberman sponsored the Senate bill, while Congressman John B. Larson sponsored the House version. The Senate passed the bill earlier this year.

"The race isn't over but this gets us one step closer to the finish line," said Dodd. "I am happy to see that the House Resources Committee has recognized the importance of this treasured part of Connecticut's past and I intend to continue to work to ensure that its legacy is protected for future generations."

"We have made great progress so far in our efforts to pave the way for Coltsville's designation as a National Park -- winning unanimous approval here in the Senate last year and again this year -- and I am optimistic that our bill will become law by the end of the Congressional session," Lieberman said. "Congressman John Larson's leadership in moving this legislation through the House brings us yet another step closer to granting this cradle of the Industrial Revolution the recognition and protection it deserves."

Larson stated: "I am thrilled that we have been able to steadily guide the legislation through the process towards becoming law and I am confident it will continue to quickly move forward. The bill is the first step in bringing a well-deserved National Park designation to this historic and promising section of Hartford. A National Park site will be an excellent addition to the current plans for redevelopment and revitalization of this area of our capital city."

The Senate and House versions of the legislation are nearly identical. Larson worked with members of the House Resources Committee to ensure that the Senate version of the bill was considered, because should it now be passed unchanged by the full House, the measure can proceed directly to the President for his signature. Taking up the House version would have created the additional time-consuming step of forcing both houses to consider the final bill again.

At a hearing before the Resources Committee in April, a representative of the National Park Service testified in support of the Coltsville Study Act, which also has the support of the prestigious National Trust for Historic Preservation. The bill requires the National Park Service to make a recommendation on adding the Coltsville property to the National Park system within three years of the bill's enactment. Connecticut currently has only one National Park site, the Weir Farm National Historic Site, which sits on the Ridgefield-Wilton Town Line.

The Coltsville property, inspired by Samuel Colt and his wife Elizabeth, is built around the original Colt armory and features additional historic structures such as Victorian homes, old mill housing, the Church of the Good Shepherd, and the Colt Memorial. Samuel Colt's legacy is representative of a time of great industrial innovation and technological development that changed the American way of life.

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