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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

October 13, 1978

JAMES R. CALLOWAY
CHIEF COUNSEL AND STAFF DIRECTOR

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

The Senate, last night, and the House, today, have passed S. 791, the Omnibus Park Authorization Bill. This bill includes an authorization to establish the New River Gorge National River in West Virginia. I believe this bill should be enacted into law. The New River is the second oldest river in the world.

I believe it is now time to provide protection for this scenic area, one of the areas of greatest natural beauty anywhere in our nation. With the increasing urbanization particularly in the eastern United States, we must act to preserve natural areas such as the New River Gorge for future generations to enjoy.

This authorization is an excellent balance between providing protection for the area for future enjoyment, and recognizing and allowing to continue the present uses and activities in the area that are not detrimental.

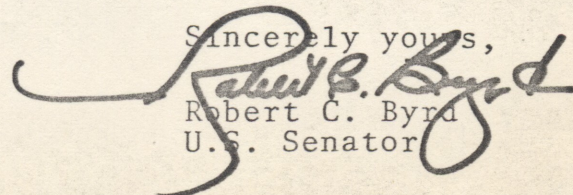
This bill is almost identical to the legislation your Administration submitted earlier this year; only minor changes have been made to clarify.

The restrictions on the condemnation power of the Secretary of the Interior; the definition of compatible commercial and business properties; the area outside the boundaries to be studied for possible future inclusion; the tributary rivers to be studied for possible inclusion in the wild and scenic rivers system, and; the provision for release of water from Bluestone Lake. All of these changes were recommended without opposition at the joint House-Senate hearings on S. 2866 and H.R. 12001 on October 3, 1978.

National River designation would make West Virginia the home of a fine new national recreation area. Visitors from other states would be welcomed to share with us the excitement and pleasures of one of America's oldest natural wonders--the New River Gorge.

For these reasons I strongly urge you to sign S. 791 into law.

Sincerely yours,


Robert C. Byrd
U.S. Senator

RCB:cck