

From the Office of UNITED STATES SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD  
Room 342, Old Senate Office Building, Washington 25, D. C.

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NOTE TO EDITOR: ENCLOSED IS A MAT OF THE ROUTE  
OF THE PARKWAY.

Washington, D. C.--U. S. Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-W. Va.) announced today that the Senate Appropriations Committee has received a long awaited feasibility study, jointly undertaken by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Public Roads, recommending construction of the proposed Allegheny Parkway in West Virginia. The study resulted from a request to the Department of the Interior on October 18, 1962, from the Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman, Senator Carl Hayden (D-Ariz.). Byrd, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, urged Senator Hayden to make the request following a hearing held on May 10, 1962, by the Public Lands Subcommittee of the Senate Interior Committee on the parkway proposal contained in S.10, introduced by Senator Byrd.

Senator Byrd said, "Reports from various government departments on S.10 were requested in January 1963 by the Senate Interior Committee, and I am hopeful that these reports, together with a report from the Bureau of the Budget on S.10, will reach the Congress in the near future.

"Because this study is favorable," Byrd said, "and because establishment of the Allegheny Parkway is recommended by the Advisory Board on National Parks, and is also supported by the President's Appalachian Regional Commission, I hope that the Congress will favor authorization of the Parkway."

Byrd first proposed the Allegheny Parkway in a bill which he introduced in the Senate on May 3, 1961, during the 87th Congress, on behalf of himself, Senator Jennings Randolph (D-W. Va.), and four other senators. Byrd reintroduced the Bill on January 15 of last year,

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shortly after the start of the First Session of the 88th Congress-- this time with one additional co-sponsor, the late Senator Estes Kefauver (D-Tenn.).

In discussing the feasibility study of the proposed Allegheny Parkway, Byrd said that "a recreational corridor is suggested for the Parkway which would range from 300 to 1000 or more feet in width, and which would extend approximately 632 miles in length, from Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in West Virginia, to Cumberland Gap National Historical Park in Kentucky, at a point near the border of Tennessee.

"About 420 miles of this recreational corridor would course in a north-south direction through West Virginia," Byrd said, adding that "in the State it would pass through a rich variety of scenic locations embracing rugged large-scale mountains, highland valleys, mountain pastures, lowland agricultural and orchard lands, forests, and rivers.

"The Parkway," Byrd continued, "would connect two National Historical Parks and provide access to, or traverse, a wide range of recreational areas, including national forests, State parks and forests, a proposed national recreational area, and Corps of Engineer reservoirs.

"For about 27 miles after its inception at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, the Allegheny Parkway would parallel historic and picturesque Potomac River," Byrd declared, "and for about 22 miles it would adjoin the highly scenic Bluestone Reservoir in the new River Gorge, with access to fishing and boating facilities."

Byrd said that "during the study, many attractive sites were found which have excellent scenic values and which could be developed as overnight and day-use areas. Also found were several potentially interesting exhibits of early pioneer life, history, geology, natural beauty, and industry.

"The development of many of these sites and exhibits," Byrd said, "could make touring the Allegheny Parkway just that much more attractive to the 71 per cent of the Nation's population who live within 500 miles of West Virginia."

In commenting on the section in the study dealing with tourist facilities, Byrd said that "day-use areas are proposed to be located from 25 to 30 miles apart, and overnight-use areas from 50 to 60 miles apart," and that some of these areas, especially ones having superior scenic or topographic value, "may be reached by short spurs from the main Parkway road.

"However," Byrd continued, "the study also suggests that the Congress give consideration to affording special assistance to operating authorities for the enlargement of overnight and day-use facilities now existing in a limited way within adjoining National Forests and State forests and parks.

"At intersecting highways," Byrd said, "where access is provided to the Parkway, opportunities would exist outside the boundaries of the Parkway for private capital to provide food and motor services, and overnight accommodations.

"In many instances," Byrd added, "intersecting roads would provide tourists with access to many kinds of facilities already existing in nearby communities. A typical example," Byrd said, "would be at Parkway mile 381, where an interchange is proposed with the West Virginia Turnpike (proposed Interstate 77). The tourist facilities of Princeton would be available only a few miles to the south."

Byrd noted that "about 41 miles of the Parkway between the West Virginia Turnpike and the Breaks Interstate Park are not recommended for immediate construction because of topographic difficulties and a combination of problems arising from coal mining in the area and associated residential and business activities.

"However," Byrd said, "until this particular stretch of the Parkway can be constructed, Parkway traffic between the West Virginia

Turnpike and the Breaks Interstate Park would be routed south over the Turnpike to U. S. Route 460, and from that point over Virginia State Route 609 to the Breaks Interstate Park, where Parkway traffic could be resumed to the southern terminus at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park."

Byrd said that "authorization and construction of the Allegheny Parkway would hold the promise of innumerable fulfillments for West Virginia. The natural attractiveness of our State is unique in the entire Eastern half of the United States.

"No other State lying east of the Mississippi River can boast of 115 mountain peaks higher than 4,000 feet," Byrd continued, "nor of 381 other peaks more than 2,000 feet high, nor of an average altitude of 1,500 feet.

"These attributes, added to a million and a half acres of recreational areas in 21 State parks, 10 State forests, and 2 national forests, hold forth a tremendous potential for tourism-- tourism which needs the Allegheny Parkway to help make West Virginia a great winter wonderland and a great summer resort," Byrd declared.