

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 30, 2021

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
Chairwoman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment and  
Related Agencies  
2007 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Joyce  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment and  
Related Agencies  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Pingree and Ranking Member Joyce:

As you craft the Fiscal Year 2022 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request robust funding for the National Trails system overall, and continued funding for NPS system operation of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail. The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail (WARO) was created to commemorate the American-French march from New England to victory at Yorktown, a march that included one-quarter Black and Indigenous soldiers in the Continental Army.

The 680-mile Trail goes through a dozen minority-majority “Founding Cities” and is the most urban trail in the National Trails system within the National Park Service (NPS). The Trail celebrates not only our independence, but also the vital alliance with our nation’s first ally, France and the important, but little appreciated role of Black and Indigenous people in the fight for American independence. Additional federal resources are critical to tell this story.

The Trail was Congressionally designated in 2009, and for ten years had only one half-time staff member. In 2019, one full-time Trail Administrator was hired to cover the 680-mile trail. With more than 500 Revolutionary locations in the trail corridor, five high potential route segments, and 115 high potential historic sites, additional staff are essential, particularly as the nation prepares for the upcoming America 250 Commemoration. The Trail is administered by the NPS and managed in partnership with the National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association, a 501(c)3 organization that in 2019 logged 11,714 volunteer hours to support it. (The entire national trails system with a huge network of volunteers is the best leveraged program in the DOI. The monetized value of partner volunteers and private dollars raised equals or exceeds the annual Federal allocation to the Trails system.)

The WARO Trail tells a great story of American freedom, and is well suited to promoting heritage tourism, outdoor recreation, and education in a dozen diverse “Founding Cities” that have economically disadvantaged populations, often in communities located adjacent to center city or Main Street neighborhoods. From north to south, the cities are Boston, MA; Providence, RI; Hartford and Waterbury, CT; White Plains, NY; Newark, New Brunswick, and Trenton, NJ; Philadelphia, PA; Wilmington, DE; Baltimore, MD; and Washington, DC.

By using the WARO National Historic Trail Founding Cities initiative to tell the story of the march to victory in Yorktown, we will benefit the 69 million residents of the WARO route’s nine

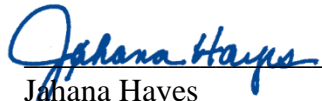
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states and the District of Columbia. In addition, we will benefit all Americans who wish to see their faces in the story of American freedom—and honor our French allies at the same time.

For these reasons, we respectfully request robust funding for the National Trails system overall, and continued funding for NPS system operation of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Johana Hayes  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Pascrell Jr.  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Himes  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Malinowski  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress