



## Community Parks Revitalization Act of 2013

### H.R. 2424

Making America's communities healthier and economically viable.

#### The Bill

H.R. 2424 — Sponsored by Representative Albio Sires (NJ-8), and cosponsored by eleven other representatives — was introduced on June 18, 2013. It was referred to the Committee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation. Read the full text of the bill:

[www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr2424/text?utm\\_campaign=govtrack\\_feed&utm\\_source=govtrack/feed&utm\\_medium=rss](http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr2424/text?utm_campaign=govtrack_feed&utm_source=govtrack/feed&utm_medium=rss)

#### Press Release

From Representative Sires: <http://sires.house.gov/press-release/sires-introduces-bill-revitalize-parks-and-strengthen-urban-communities>

#### The Issues

- Many American communities suffer from a lack of green space, dilapidated and outdated facilities, unsafe playgrounds, and inadequate access to recreation resources.<sup>1</sup>
- Childhood obesity has tripled in the last thirty years, and more than 75 percent of American adults are classified as regularly sedentary — a leading cause of obesity and chronic disease.<sup>2</sup>
- A community without fully functional park systems is less able to create jobs, stimulate growth, and attract business investment, a highly skilled workforce, and tourism dollars.<sup>3</sup>

#### Solutions in This Bill

The Community Parks Revitalization Act will provide matching federal grants for much needed parks and recreation infrastructure. Specifically, the bill would authorize the Department of Housing and Urban Development to:

- Create a federal program that provides localities with competitive loans, loan guarantees, and lines of credit for construction or the capital costs of large scale parks and recreation projects.
- Administer grants to assist localities in rebuilding, remodeling, expanding, or developing existing or new recreational areas and facilities.
- Provide matching grants for innovative programming, with an emphasis on at-risk youth, returning veterans, and military families.

By providing grants and innovative financing for local parks and recreation, Congress has the opportunity to spur economic growth and abate the public health crisis at the local community level.

#### Data Points

- Access to quality parks and recreation opportunities positively impacts public health and provides for cost-effective and non-regulatory means of addressing environmental and conservation concerns.<sup>4</sup>
- More than four out of every five Americans lives in an urban or metropolitan area.<sup>5</sup>
- More than thirty studies have shown that parks and green space positively affect property values for adjacent properties by as much as 25 percent, increase local tax revenues, and attract tourism dollars.<sup>6</sup>
- Publications such as *Forbes*, *Business Week*, and the *Wall Street Journal* consistently cite the presence of quality parks and recreation resources as key criteria in listing the best cities for businesses, jobs, and places to live.
- The Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR) — a program of the federal government designed to provide matching grants to localities in economically distressed communities — has not been funded since 2002.<sup>7</sup>

- Outdoor recreation contributes \$646 billion to the U.S. economy, supports 6.1 million direct jobs, and generates \$80 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenue — each year.<sup>8</sup>
- A 2007 study in Philadelphia shows that the city's park system contributed nearly \$7.5 million in savings for storm water treatment and air pollution mitigation.<sup>9</sup>

### Other Organizations Supporting This Legislation

Alliance for Biking and Walking	National Recreation and Park Association
Alliance for Community Trees	Northeast Midwest Institute
America Bikes	Outdoors America
American Camp Association	Outdoor Industry Association
American Planning Association	Patton Boggs
American Society of Landscape Architects	Police Athletic League
Audubon International	Rails to Trails Conservancy
Boys and Girls Club of America	Smart Growth America
City Park Alliance	Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association
Coalition for Recreational Trails	Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition
International Mountain Biking Association	Trust for Public Lands
League of American Bicyclists	United States Soccer Foundation
National Alliance for Healthy Communities	United States Tennis Association
National Alliance for Hispanic Health	United States Conference of Mayors
National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity	Up2Us

### Contact Information

#### The Office of Representative Albio Sires

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### Notes

1. National Park and Recreation Association. (2013). *Community parks revitalization fact sheet*. Retrieved from [www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpaorg/Professional\\_Development/Conferences\\_and\\_Schools/Legislative\\_Forum/Printed\\_Materials/Community-Parks-Revitalization-Act.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpaorg/Professional_Development/Conferences_and_Schools/Legislative_Forum/Printed_Materials/Community-Parks-Revitalization-Act.pdf)
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2010). NCHS health e-stat. Retrieved from [www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/sedentary/sedentary.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/sedentary/sedentary.htm)
3. Political Economy Research Institute, University of Massachusetts. (2009). *The New York state park system: An economic asset to the Empire State*.
4. National Park and Recreation Association. (2013). *Community parks revitalization fact sheet*. Retrieved from [www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpaorg/Professional\\_Development/Conferences\\_and\\_Schools/Legislative\\_Forum/Printed\\_Materials/Community-Parks-Revitalization-Act.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpaorg/Professional_Development/Conferences_and_Schools/Legislative_Forum/Printed_Materials/Community-Parks-Revitalization-Act.pdf)
5. United States Census. (2010).
6. Outdoor Industry Association. (2013). Retrieved from [www.outdoorindustry.org/research/index.html](http://www.outdoorindustry.org/research/index.html)
7. National Park and Recreation Association. (2013). *Community parks revitalization fact sheet*. Retrieved from [www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpaorg/Professional\\_Development/Conferences\\_and\\_Schools/Legislative\\_Forum/Printed\\_Materials/Community-Parks-Revitalization-Act.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpaorg/Professional_Development/Conferences_and_Schools/Legislative_Forum/Printed_Materials/Community-Parks-Revitalization-Act.pdf)
8. Outdoor Industry Association. (2013).
9. The Trust for the Public Land. (2013). *Pennsylvania's return on investment in the Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund*. Retrieved from <http://cloud.tpl.org/pubs/benefits-pa-keystone-roi-report.pdf>

### For More Information, Contact

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