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## House passes bill to establish Every Kid Outdoors program

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On September 12, 2018, the House passed the Every Kid Outdoors Act (H.R. 3186) to provide fourth grade students and accompanying individuals with free access to federally managed public lands and waters, including historic sites such as national parks.

Introduced by Representative Niki Tsongas (D-MA-3), H.R. 3186 codifies the already-existing “Every Kid in a Park” initiative launched in 2015 by President Barack Obama under the Department of the Interior. Seven of the Department’s bureaus would be tasked with jointly administering the program, including the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Because the bill would codify the existing Every Kid in a Park program, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that implementing the program as outlined in H.R. 3186 would result in no additional costs to the federal government. The program is currently funded through the National Park Service’s budget for youth engagement programs and from private donations and volunteer hours.

A companion bill was introduced in the Senate (S. 1522) by Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on National Parks, on July 19, 2017.

To date, over 350,000 fourth graders across the country have participated in the ‘Every Kid in a Park’ initiative, covering more than 2,000 federally managed sites.

*Sources: Department of the Interior; Library of Congress.*

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