

# NACPRO



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION OFFICIALS**

*An Affiliate of National Association of Counties and the National Recreation and Park Association*

## 2016-17 Executive Board

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March 17, 2017

The Honorable Jeff Flake  
Senate Russell Office Building 413  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Flake:

I'm writing today on behalf of the National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials (NACPRO) to thank you and Senator McCain for introducing S. 216, the RPPA Commercial Recreation Concessions Pilot Program Act. NACPRO is a non-profit, professional organization that advances official policies that promote county and regional park and recreation issues while providing members with opportunities to network, exchange ideas and best practices, and enhance professional development. NACPRO is a National Association of Counties affiliate organization.

As you know, Congress, in 1926, enacted the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (RPPA), which authorizes the sale and lease of certain public lands for recreation or public purposes to state and local governments. Since the passage of the act, counties across the west have benefitted. On these lands, many counties now provide parks, campgrounds, public golf courses and miles of recreational trails.


The BLM has benefitted significantly by counties taking an active management role in overseeing recreational areas that BLM is not equipped to operate and maintain. Most importantly, the public is provided with recreation opportunities that enhance the quality of life for local residents and that provide recreational tourism opportunities for visitors, which in turn helps stimulate local economies.

Residents and visitors continue to express a need for new and enhanced facilities and services on these lands. Many counties are not capable of financing large capital projects nor are they able to staff new facilities, so recently, many counties have looked to

public/private partnerships or third party concession agreements to expand recreation and tourism opportunities. Unfortunately, BLM does not believe it has the authority to allow these types of agreements on county lands that were grants under the RPPA, so NACPRO is thankful that you have introduced legislation that would establish such a pilot program for commercial recreation concessions.

Given that there are obvious benefits to BLM, local economies, and, most of all, to the recreating public, we think it is vital for BLM to find a way to not only allow, but encourage these types of partnerships. NACPRO believes the RPPA Commercial Recreation Concessions Pilot Program Act is an excellent first step and we are extremely thankful that you are willing to lead the initiative. Please let us know if we can provide any assistance to you with this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Knight". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Knight  
NACPRO President