

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

Submitted by
R.J. Cardin, Director
Maricopa County Parks and Recreation

Senator McSally Seeks Recreation Bill Sponsors

Maricopa County has been working for a number of years to expand recreation opportunities through both county-funded development and private concessions on County parklands. A significant amount of the parkland in Maricopa County regional park system was acquired through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (RPPA) from the United States Bureau of Land Management. According to the RPPA, private concessions are not allowed on these lands even if they serve to further the recreation mission of the managing agency.

Senator McSally (R-AZ), recently introduced legislation (S. 3060) to establish a pilot program that allows private sector concessions on RPPA land. The bill was also introduced in the House (H.R. 4028) by Representative Gosar (R-AZ). All governments who have received land through the RPPA are eligible to apply to participate in the program. The program would allow government entities to seek appropriate recreation concessionaires and to generate additional revenues for further maintenance and improvements in the park.

Senator McSally is actively seeking sponsors who will sign-on to the Bill. If this legislation is beneficial to your organization, please contact your Senator and ask them to support this effort.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 17, 2019

Contact: [Amy Lawrence](#) (McSally)

McSally Introduces Bill to Allow Recreational Concessions on Public Land

U.S. SENATE – U.S. Senator Martha McSally (R-AZ) introduced legislation yesterday to expand recreational concessions, such as mountain bike rentals, paragliding, horseback riding, camping, and ziplining, in order to enhance visitor experience on certain public lands.

Currently, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) allows a number of third-party commercial concessions to take place on public land. However, federal lands managed by states, local governments, and non-profits through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (RPPA) are prohibited or severely restricted from allowing these concessions.

“Public lands are meant to be shared by all,” **said McSally**. “My legislation will increase recreational opportunities and allow people to more fully enjoy and appreciate the beauty of our public lands across the country.”

“Maricopa County is blessed with wide open spaces for our residents and visitors to enjoy year-round,” **said Maricopa County Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Gates**. “We are grateful to

Senator McSally for introducing this legislation that will allow counties to work with the Bureau of Land Management to create new outdoor recreation opportunities without compromising the integrity of these precious natural resources.”

This bill directs the Department of Interior to establish a pilot program of up to 10 sites to allow third-party concessions on public land governed by the RPPA, which authorizes the sale or lease of public lands for recreational or public purposes to State or local governments, or qualified nonprofit organizations.

Rep. Gosar (R-AZ) introduced companion legislation in the House ([H.R.4028](#)).

The RPPA Commercial Recreation Concessions Pilot Program Act has been endorsed by the National Association of Counties, the National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials, the National Association of State Park Directors, and the National Recreation and Park Association.

The text of the bill can be found [HERE](#).