



Office of Representative Heath Shuler

Representing North Carolina's Eleventh Congressional District

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Congressman Shuler's Carl Sandburg Bill Passes House *House Approves 115 Acre Expansion*

Washington, D.C. – A bill offered by Representative Heath Shuler to allow the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site to expand by 115 acres and use up to five acres for a visitor center and increased parking successfully passed the House of Representatives this afternoon. The Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site Boundary Revision Act, H.R. 1100, was the first bill introduced by Rep. Shuler and passed with wide support 268-150.

“I am extremely pleased that we have taken another important step in protecting the integrity and natural beauty of the Carl Sandburg Home for future generations,” said Rep. Shuler. “The Sandburg Home also draws thousands of tourists to Western North Carolina each year. By expanding the site and allowing the building of a new visitor’s center we will ensure that the Sandburg Home continues to help drive our economy.”

In 2003 the National Park Service recommended the expansion of the historic site’s boundary by up to 115 acres to allow construction of a visitor center and parking lot as well as to protect the pastoral views from Sandburg’s estate. This recommendation was developed through a 4-year planning process that involved extensive community input.

Henderson County Commissioner Chuck McGrady, who had testified in favor of H.R. 1100 before the House Committee on Natural Resources, was also excited by the bill’s successful passage. “I am very thankful to Congressman Shuler for his leadership on this bill. Allowing the expansion of the Sandburg Home will protect the historic value of the site and enhance visitor’s experiences.”

With today’s passage in the House, the legislation now moves to the Senate where companion legislation has already been introduced by Senators Elizabeth Dole and Richard Burr.

“The Carl Sandburg Home has enriched the lives of many North Carolinians through its history, natural beauty and abundant educational opportunities,” said U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Dole. “I am pleased to work with Rep. Shuler on this important bill and am encouraged by the action the House took today. I will continue to work in the Senate to advance my companion legislation, so that future generations may enjoy this state treasure for years to come.”

The text of Rep. Shuler’s floor statement is below.

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Text of Representative Heath Shuler's Floor Statement on H.R. 1100

Madam Chair, Carl Sandburg was a national treasure who spent the last 20 years of his life in the mountains of Western North Carolina.

While he was not a native son, we in North Carolina are certainly proud to claim him as one of our own.

His farm is now a National Historic Site visited by thousands of families from around the world.

This site is important both for its history and its beauty.

H.R. 1100 would revise the boundary of the Historic Site to add 115 acres.

The addition would serve two purposes.

The first purpose is to protect the scenic views and open spaces the Sandburg family enjoyed from their home.

The second purpose is to allow the site to build a much-needed visitor center and parking area.

These additions are part of the site's general management plan which was adopted in 2003, after a full public process.

This bill has wide bipartisan support.

The Administration has testified in support of this bill.

North Carolina Senators Richard Burr and Elizabeth Dole are pushing companion legislation in the Senate.

And this is strongly supported by the local county government.

I thank Chairman Grijalva and the members of the committee for their support, and I yield back the balance of my time.