

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 294

To create a commission to develop a plan for establishing a Museum of Ideas.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 12, 2011

Mr. STEARNS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To create a commission to develop a plan for establishing a Museum of Ideas.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Museum of Ideas Act
5 of 2011”.

6 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT.**

7 There is established a commission to be known as the
8 “Museum of Ideas Commission” (hereinafter in this Act
9 referred to as the “Commission”).

1 **SEC. 3. DUTIES OF COMMISSION.**

2 (a) PLAN.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall de-
4 velop a plan for establishing in Washington, DC, a
5 museum that presents the history and evolution of
6 human ideas.

7 (2) SPECIFICALLY.—The plan must address the
8 following issues:

9 (A) How to present the history and evo-
10 lution of human ideas, including ideas in the
11 fields of science, sociology, philosophy, econom-
12 ics, and politics.

13 (B) The cost of establishing such a mu-
14 seum.

15 (C) Possible locations for such a museum.

16 (D) Whether such a museum should be es-
17 tablished within the Smithsonian Institution.

18 (b) REPORT.—The Commission shall, not later than
19 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, submit a
20 report to Congress and the President setting forth the
21 plan developed under subsection (a).

22 **SEC. 4. MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS.**

23 (a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission
24 shall be composed of 11 members, to be appointed as fol-
25 lows:

1 (1) The President shall appoint 2 members, one
2 of whom shall serve as chairperson of the Commis-
3 sion.

4 (2) The majority leader of the House of Rep-
5 resentatives shall appoint 2 members.

6 (3) The minority leader of the House of Rep-
7 resentatives shall appoint 2 members.

8 (4) The majority leader of the Senate shall ap-
9 point 2 members.

10 (5) The minority leader of the Senate shall ap-
11 point 2 members.

12 (6) The Secretary of the Interior shall appoint
13 1 member.

14 (b) CRITERIA FOR MEMBER.—

15 (1) NO MEMBER OF CONGRESS.—A Member of
16 Congress may not be a member of the Commission.

17 (2) CONSULTATION WITH APPOINTING AU-
18 THORITIES.—Prior to making an appointment, each
19 appointing authority should consult with the other
20 appointing authorities to ensure that the members
21 appointed to the Commission represent a wide range
22 of expertise that would assist the Commission in car-
23 rying out the required duties under this Act, includ-
24 ing academic leaders, industrial leaders, and individ-
25 uals familiar with establishing museums.

1 (c) DATE FOR ORIGINAL APPOINTMENT.—The ap-
2 pointing authorities described in subsection (a) shall ap-
3 point the initial members of the Commission not later than
4 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

5 (d) TERMS.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The term of each member is
7 for the life of the Commission.

8 (2) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commission
9 shall be filled not later than 30 days after such va-
10 cancy occurs and in the manner in which the origi-
11 nal appointment was made.

12 (e) PAY AND REIMBURSEMENT.—

13 (1) NO PAY FOR MEMBERS.—Members of the
14 Commission shall serve without pay.

15 (2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each member shall
16 receive travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of
17 subsistence under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title
18 5, United States Code.

19 (f) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet upon
20 the call of the chairperson or a majority of its members.

21 (g) QUORUM.—Six members of the Commission shall
22 constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may hold hear-
23 ings.

1 **SEC. 5. POWERS OF COMMISSION.**

2 (a) HEARINGS AND EVIDENCE.—The Commission
3 may, for the purpose of carrying out this Act, hold such
4 hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such
5 testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission
6 considers appropriate.

7 (b) POWERS OF MEMBERS AND AGENTS.—Any mem-
8 ber or agent of the Commission may, if authorized by the
9 Commission, take any action which the Commission is au-
10 thorized to take by this section.

11 (c) MAILS.—The Commission may use the United
12 States mails in the same manner and under the same con-
13 ditions as other departments and agencies of the United
14 States.

15 (d) GIFTS.—To the extent provided in advance in ap-
16 propriation Acts, the Commission may accept, use, and
17 dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

18 **SEC. 6. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.**

19 The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to—

20 (1) provide assistance to the Commission, in-
21 cluding advice on collections, storage, and archives;

22 (2) provide assistance in conducting any public
23 hearings or forums held by the Commission; and

24 (3) provide staff assistance and support to the
25 Commission.

1 **SEC. 7. TERMINATION.**

2 The Commission shall terminate 60 days after sub-
3 mitting its final report under section 3.

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