

113TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3075

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of designating the study area as the Black Metropolis National Heritage Area in the State of Illinois, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 10, 2013

Mr. RUSH introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of designating the study area as the Black Metropolis National Heritage Area in the State of Illinois, and for other purposes.

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 “Black Metropolis Na-  
5 tional Heritage Area Study Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1           (1) The Black Metropolis area on Chicago, Illi-  
2           nois' South Side has a cohesive and distinctive his-  
3           tory as well as an important streetscape that distin-  
4           guishes the area as worthy of designation as a Na-  
5           tional Heritage Area.

6           (2) The historic features of Chicago's Black  
7           Metropolis predate the Great Migration of 1916-  
8           1919 and illustrate its influence on African-Amer-  
9           ican life in Chicago and the Nation as a result of  
10          this demographic phenomenon in which 500,000 Af-  
11          rican-Americans migrated to the North in search of  
12          work and other opportunities, with 50,000 of that  
13          aggregate relocating in Chicago.

14          (3) The Black Metropolis, as a setting, wit-  
15          nessed some of the finest accomplishments in Afri-  
16          can-American contributions to Chicago, the State of  
17          Illinois, and the Nation, while its legally and socially  
18          proscribed citizens challenged their environment and  
19          their Nation to fulfill its promise as a place of op-  
20          portunity for all.

21          (4) These contributions and accomplishments  
22          fall into the following main categories:

23                  (A) BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL  
24                  PURSUITS.—With State Street developing as  
25                  the Black Metropolis' "Wall Street", the area

1 produced two of the largest Black banking op-  
2 erations in the Nation in the Binga State and  
3 Douglass National Banks and scores of smaller  
4 businesses ranging from print shops to res-  
5 taurants to clothing stores to hair salons and  
6 barbershops.

7 (B) CULTURE AND AESTHETICS.—The  
8 area emerged as a musical mecca ranging from  
9 jazz to gospel to delta and urban blues to  
10 rhythm and blues and was home for institutions  
11 such as the George Cleveland Hall Branch Li-  
12 brary, which nurtured literary giants such as  
13 Langston Hughes, the South Side Community  
14 Arts Center, and the DuSable Museum of Afri-  
15 can American History and Culture.

16 (C) EDUCATION.—The area includes the  
17 first public secondary school in the State of Illi-  
18 nois built specifically to accommodate the edu-  
19 cational needs of African-American students,  
20 which opened in 1934 at 4934 South Wabash  
21 Avenue and was named in honor of Chicago’s  
22 first non-native inhabitant and trader, Jean  
23 Baptiste Pointe du Sable, a Black man from  
24 Haiti, and whose illustrious graduates include

1 Nat “King” Cole and Chicago Mayor Harold  
2 Washington.

3 (D) GOVERNANCE AND POLITICS.—From  
4 its political bases in the area’s Second Ward  
5 and the First Congressional District, Chicago’s  
6 Black Metropolis proved itself a political center  
7 for all African-Americans, producing the first  
8 African-American to sit in Congress in the 20th  
9 century, the Honorable Oscar DePriest, as well  
10 as the first African-American Democratic con-  
11 gressman, the Honorable Arthur W. Mitchell,  
12 succeeded by Honorable William L. Dawson,  
13 the Honorable Ralph H. Metcalfe, the Honor-  
14 able Bennett M. Stewart, and the Honorable  
15 Harold Washington, later the city’s first elected  
16 African-American mayor, and the Honorable  
17 Charles A. Hayes.

18 (E) HEALTH CARE.—The area includes  
19 Provident Hospital, founded in 1891 by the  
20 brilliant African-American surgeon Dr. Daniel  
21 Hale Williams and site of the first successful  
22 suturing of the human heart by Dr. Williams in  
23 1893.

24 (F) LABOR.—The area was home to mil-  
25 lions of unskilled and semi-skilled African-

1 American workers, including the packinghouse  
2 workers who arrived during the Great Migra-  
3 tion and constituted 25 percent of the stock-  
4 yards work force during World War I, and the  
5 Pullman porters who represented a full 20 per-  
6 cent of the Nation’s African-American work-  
7 force during the early 1900s.

8 (G) MILITARY LIFE AND PATRIOTISM.—Af-  
9 rican-American men enlisted in the Union Army  
10 on the grounds of Camp Douglass within the  
11 Black Metropolis area as part of the 29th In-  
12 fantry Regiment of the United States Colored  
13 Troops, and a generation later trained at the  
14 Eighth Regiment Armory nearby before em-  
15 barking for France as part of what President  
16 Wilson referred to as the great crusade to  
17 “make the world safe for democracy” during  
18 World War I.

19 (H) RECREATION AND COMPETITIVE  
20 SPORTS.—Early on, the Nation’s most popular  
21 sports (baseball, boxing, football, track and bas-  
22 ketball) enjoyed support from the Black Me-  
23 tropolis’ population and drew participants who  
24 earned widespread recognition such as Rube  
25 Foster, a native Chicagoan, who founded the

1 Negro Baseball League and its local team, the  
2 American Giants.

3 (I) RELIGION AND CHURCH ACTIVISM.—

4 The area includes Quinn Chapel African Meth-  
5 odist Episcopal (A.M.E) Church, an antebellum  
6 center of abolitionist activity, and a major sta-  
7 tion on the Underground Railroad, and with  
8 emancipation, there was another religious move-  
9 ment to provide and protect the civil rights of  
10 all citizens led by Black Metropolis churches  
11 such as Quinn Chapel and Bethel A.M.E.

12 (J) SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CIVIL RIGHTS.—

13 It was from within the Black Metropolis area in  
14 the early 20th century that Ida B. Wells-  
15 Barnett waged her crusade for justice for Afri-  
16 can-Americans and women and worked to es-  
17 tablish the first National Association for the  
18 Advancement of Colored People branch in that  
19 group's national network in 1912.

20 (K) STREETS CAPES.—The area includes

21 many historic locations, including those along  
22 State Street and 35th Street, ranging from the  
23 Overton Hygienic Manufacturing Building at  
24 3617 South State Street and the Chicago Bee  
25 Building at 3647 South State Street (both des-

1           ignated as Chicago City Landmarks) to Liberty  
2           Life Insurance Company at 3501 South Park-  
3           way and a monument and park dedicated to  
4           United States Senator Stephen Douglas (des-  
5           ignated as a State Landmark) at Lake Park  
6           Avenue and 35th Street, green and public  
7           spaces, stretching from Chicago’s lakefront to  
8           historic park and boulevard systems to the  
9           West, and is now the proposed site for the 2016  
10          Olympics in the City of Chicago’s bid to host  
11          this event.

12 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

13         In this Act:

14           (1) **HERITAGE AREA.**—The term “Heritage  
15           Area” means the Black Metropolis National Herit-  
16           age Area.

17           (2) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means  
18           the Secretary of the Interior.

19           (3) **STUDY AREA.**—The term “study area”  
20           means the region bounded as follows:

21                 (A) 18th Street on the North and 22nd  
22                 Street on the South, from Lake Michigan on  
23                 the East to Wentworth Avenue to the West.

24                 (B) 22nd Street on the North to 35th  
25                 Street on the South, from Lake Michigan on

1 the East to the Dan Ryan Expressway on the  
2 West.

3 (C) 35th Street on the North and 47th  
4 Street on the South, from Lake Michigan on  
5 the East to the B&O Railroad (Stewart Ave-  
6 nue) on the West.

7 (D) 47th Street on the North to 55th  
8 Street on the South, from Cottage Grove Ave-  
9 nue on the East to the Dan Ryan Expressway  
10 on the West.

11 (E) 55th Street on the North to 67th  
12 Street on the South, from State Street on the  
13 West to Cottage Grove Avenue/South Chicago  
14 Avenue on the East.

15 (F) 67th Street on the North to 71st  
16 Street on the South, from Cottage Grove Ave-  
17 nue/South Chicago Avenue on the West to the  
18 Metra Railroad tracks on the East.

19 **SEC. 4. BLACK METROPOLIS NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**  
20 **STUDY.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation  
22 with the managers of any Federal land within the Herit-  
23 age Area, appropriate State and local governmental agen-  
24 cies, and any interested organizations, shall conduct a



1 study to determine the feasibility of designating the study  
2 area as the Black Metropolis National Heritage Area.

3 (b) REQUIREMENTS.—The study shall include anal-  
4 ysis, documentation, and determinations on whether—

5 (1) the study area—

6 (A) has an assemblage of natural, historic,  
7 cultural, educational, scenic, or recreational re-  
8 sources that together are nationally important  
9 to the heritage of the United States;

10 (B) represents distinctive aspects of the  
11 heritage of the United States worthy of recogni-  
12 tion, conservation, interpretation, and con-  
13 tinuing use;

14 (C) is best managed through agreements  
15 between public and private entities at the local  
16 or regional level;

17 (D) reflects traditions, customs, beliefs,  
18 and folklife that are a valuable part of the her-  
19 itage of the United States;

20 (E) provides outstanding opportunities to  
21 conserve natural, historical, cultural, or scenic  
22 features;

23 (F) provides outstanding recreational and  
24 educational opportunities; and

1 (G) has resources and traditional uses that  
2 have national importance;

3 (2) residents, business interests, nonprofit orga-  
4 nizations, the Federal Government (including rel-  
5 evant Federal land management agencies), and  
6 State, local, and tribal governments within the study  
7 area—

8 (A) are involved in the planning; and

9 (B) have demonstrated significant support  
10 through letters and other means for designation  
11 and management of the Heritage Area; and

12 (3) the study area has been identified and sup-  
13 ported by the public, private business, and local and  
14 State agencies.

15 **SEC. 5. REPORT.**

16 Not later than 3 fiscal years after the date on which  
17 funds are made available to carry out the this Act, the  
18 Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Re-  
19 sources of the House of Representatives and the Com-  
20 mittee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate  
21 a report that describes the findings, conclusions, and rec-  
22 ommendations of the Secretary with respect to the study.

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