

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3400

To adopt the North American bison as the national mammal of the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 30, 2013

Mr. CLAY (for himself, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. SERRANO, and Mrs. NOEM) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

A BILL

To adopt the North American bison as the national mammal of the United States.

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 “National Bison Legacy
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) bison are considered to be a historical sym-
9 bol of the United States;

1 (2) bison were integrally linked with the eco-
2 nomic and spiritual lives of many Indian tribes
3 through trade and sacred ceremonies;

4 (3) there are more than 60 Indian tribes par-
5 ticipating in the Intertribal Buffalo Council;

6 (4) numerous members of Indian tribes—

7 (A) are involved in bison restoration on
8 tribal land; and

9 (B) have a combined herd on more than
10 1,000,000 acres of tribal land;

11 (5) the Intertribal Buffalo Council is a tribal
12 organization incorporated pursuant to section 17 of
13 the Act of June 18, 1934 (commonly known as “In-
14 dian Reorganization Act”) (25 U.S.C. 477);

15 (6) bison play an ecologically important role in
16 modifying and improving the types of grasses found
17 in landscapes to the benefit of grassland ecosystems;

18 (7) a small group of ranchers helped save bison
19 from extinction in the late 1800s by gathering the
20 remnants of the decimated herds;

21 (8) bison hold significant economic value for
22 private producers and rural communities;

23 (9) as of 2007, 200,000 head of bison were
24 under the stewardship of private producers, creating
25 jobs and providing a sustainable and healthy meat

1 source contributing to the food security of the
2 United States;

3 (10) on December 8, 1905, William Hornaday,
4 Theodore Roosevelt and others formed the American
5 Bison Society in response to the near extinction of
6 bison in the United States;

7 (11) on October 11, 1907, the American Bison
8 Society sent 15 captive-bred bison from the New
9 York Zoological Park, now the Bronx Zoo, to the
10 first wildlife refuge in the United States, which was
11 known as the “Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge”,
12 resulting in the first successful reintroduction of a
13 mammal species on the brink of extinction back into
14 its natural habitat;

15 (12) in 2005, the American Bison Society was
16 reestablished, bringing together bison ranchers,
17 managers from Indian tribes, Federal and State
18 agencies conservation organizations, and natural and
19 social scientists from the United States, Canada,
20 and Mexico to create a vision for the North Amer-
21 ican bison in the 21st century;

22 (13) the buffalo nickel played an important role
23 in modernizing the currency of the United States;

24 (14) a bison has been depicted on the official
25 seal of the Department of the Interior almost con-

1 tinuously since 1912, is portrayed on 2 State flags,
2 has been adopted by 3 States as the official mammal
3 or animal of those States, and has been adopted as
4 a mascot by several sports teams, which highlights
5 the iconic significance of bison in the United States;

6 (15) there are bison herds in National Wildlife
7 Refuges and National Parks;

8 (16) there are bison in State-managed herds
9 across 11 States;

10 (17) there is a growing effort to celebrate and
11 officially recognize the historical, cultural, and eco-
12 nomic significance of the North American bison to
13 the heritage of the United States;

14 (18) in the 1st session of the 113th Congress,
15 22 United States Senators led a successful effort to
16 enact a resolution to designate November 2, 2013,
17 as the second annual National Bison Day; and

18 (19) members of Indian tribes, bison producers,
19 conservationists, sportsmen, educators, and other
20 public and private partners have participated in the
21 annual National Bison Day celebration at several
22 events across the United States and are committed
23 to continuing this tradition annually on the first
24 Saturday of November.

1 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADOPTION OF THE NORTH**
2 **AMERICAN BISON AS THE NATIONAL MAM-**
3 **MAL.**

4 The mammal commonly known as the “North Amer-
5 ican bison” is adopted as the national mammal of the
6 United States.

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