

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 15, 2024

Director Charles F. Sams III
National Park Service Director
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Dear Director Sams,

Thank you for the steps you are taking to help designate the Blue Ridge Parkway as a National Historic Landmark. I write to express my strong support for designating the Blue Ridge Parkway as a National Historic Landmark.

The Blue Ridge Parkway spans 469 miles – the majority of which run through North Carolina – and serves as a gateway for millions of Americans to experience the region’s unique culture and heritage. Noted for its scenic beauty, incredible hiking trails, and accessible tranquility, the Blue Ridge Parkway is home to some of North Carolina’s best views. Popular sites along the Parkway include Craggy Gardens, Mount Mitchell, Graveyard Fields, Black Balsam, Grandfather Mountain, and Devil’s Courthouse. This historic landmark’s distinction cannot be replicated anywhere else in the United States or the world.

The Parkway’s natural beauty and rich history also bring great economic benefits to Western North Carolina and have done so since construction on the Parkway began in 1935. In the nearly 50 years it took to plan and construct this national landmark, around 90 percent of the labor was sourced locally, employing thousands of North Carolinians. Since 1946, The Blue Ridge Parkway has become the most frequently visited site within the national park system. In 2022, over 15 million visitors spent nearly \$1.3 billion in and around the communities near the Parkway. These contributions help support thousands of jobs and keep Appalachia alive.

On behalf of the people of North Carolina, I encourage the Department of Interior and the National Historic Landmarks Committee to designate the Blue Ridge Parkway as a National Historic Landmark. Thank you for your consideration. I stand ready to assist as we work to better appreciate the significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway to our nation.

Sincerely,



Ted Budd
U.S. Senator

CC: Dr. Lisa Davidson, Program Manager, National Park Service