

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1232

To conduct a special resource study of Fort Pillow Historic State Park
in Henning, Tennessee, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

Mr. COHEN (for himself, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. RASKIN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To conduct a special resource study of Fort Pillow Historic State Park in Henning, Tennessee, 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 “Fort Pillow National Bat-
5 tlefield Park Study Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds as follows:

8 (1) Fort Pillow was originally built by Confed-
9 erate troops in 1861 and named after General Gid-
10 eon J. Pillow of Maury County, Tennessee.

1 (2) The battle of Fort Pillow was fought on
2 April 12, 1864, at Fort Pillow in Henning, Ten-
3 nessee, during the American Civil War.

4 (3) At Fort Pillow, Tennessee, Confederate
5 forces never defeated the Union Navy. Instead, they
6 perpetrated a heinous massacre after violating a flag
7 of truce by advantageously repositioning rebel troops
8 and by looting government buildings and private
9 storefronts surrounding the fort.

10 (4) According to the 1864 Report “Fort Pillow
11 Massacre” from the United States Congress Joint
12 Committee on the Conduct of the War, “The officers
13 and men seem to vie with each other in the devilish
14 work; men, women and even children, wherever
15 found, were deliberately shot down, beaten and
16 hacked with sabers. . . .”.

17 (5) The Union garrison consisted of 19 officers
18 and 538 troops of whom 262 were United States
19 Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.).

20 (6) Per the report, “Of the men, from three
21 hundred to four hundred are known to have been
22 killed at Fort Pillow, of whom at least three hundred
23 were murdered in cold blood after the fort was in
24 possession of the rebels and our men had thrown
25 down their arms and ceased to offer resistance.”.

1 (7) The massacre at Fort Pillow demonstrated
2 to all U.S.C.T. that surrender was not an option.
3 The massacre at Fort Pillow became a rallying cry
4 and motivation for the 209,147 U.S.C.T.

5 (8) The 209,147 U.S.C.T. fundamentally con-
6 tributed to the Union's defeat of the Confederacy.

7 (9) In 1971, Fort Pillow became a State park.

8 (10) In 1973, Fort Pillow was added to the Na-
9 tional Register of Historic Places.

10 (11) The following year, in 1974, Fort Pillow
11 was designated as a National Historic Landmark.

12 (12) Fort Pillow Historic State Park consists of
13 1,642 acres.

14 (13) The Park contains several attraction areas
15 such as a Civil War museum, hiking trail, camping
16 ground, and picnic area.

17 (14) This site deserves to become a National
18 Battlefield Park due to its profound effect on
19 U.S.C.T. and all Union forces in their fight to pre-
20 serve the United States of America.

21 **SEC. 3. FORT PILLOW SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.**

22 The Secretary of the Interior shall conduct a special
23 resource study of Fort Pillow Historic State Park in
24 Henning, Tennessee. Fort Pillow is a State park that fea-

1 tures the American Civil War history and the Massacre
2 at Fort Pillow. The Secretary shall—

3 (1) evaluate the site’s national significance; and

4 (2) determine the suitability and feasibility of

5 designating it as a unit of the National Historic

6 Park System.

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