



Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for taking the time to hear and read all of the submitted testimony on SCR 4006. We are here today in support of SCR 4006.

My name is Deb Lee Carson, and I am the Co-Founder of the nonprofit Wild Lands Wild Horses and writer and co-host of the forthcoming documentary on the Theodore Roosevelt National Park horses to be released in 2026.

Our documentary, in partnership with Click Content Studios, a division of Forum Communications in Fargo, has gathered over 17 interviews—including former park management, advocates, scientists, government officials, natives, historians, locals, and journalists—with more still to come.

My personal story begins in 2006 with this historical herd and their power and charm have brought me back to North Dakota multiples times a year since that first introduction.

This herd of resilient survivors have taught us respect for their environment—their home, the significance of their role in relation to other species, along with the importance of their cultural history, and we have witnessed firsthand the difficult task in managing this herd to the public. In addition three of our board members have adopted horses from TRNP.

Furthermore these horses have exposed us to the many types of mindsets, cultures, and life experiences who visit the TRNP landscape from around the world, with the primary draw the horses.

For those millions who cannot physically visit TRNP, they follow social media accounts. These accounts take the time to document and share the lives of these historical horses for the world to see. These dedicated humans, hike hundreds of miles, in all kinds of conditions, to give millions the chance to witness life in TRNP, all of it—birth through death, and how they co-exist with ALL species.

Passing SCR 4006 will take this herd one step closer to solidifying their cultural place in history for all Americans and especially for the intangible cultural heritage the community of Medora was built on and the state of North Dakota recognizes is important to the fabric of her communities.





They have survived not just the harsh landscape but also repeated political battles that have threatened their very existence. And yet, they are still here. That speaks volumes. The people want them here. And they belong here. Now, we have an opportunity to secure their future.

We must all remember that there would be no TRNP if T.R. had not visited this region. We also know that T.R. wrote about witnessing mustangs in his time there. We also know T.R. came to this region to grieve and would ride his horse out across those badlands to heal.

Federal protection is not an option—it is a necessity to ensure these horses do not become a footnote in history.

It is way past the time to recognize their place in history regardless of what their origin story is. The American public clamored for that during the recent EA process. Our lives, and millions of others, have been incredibly enriched by this historic herd of horses that call that amazing place home, that place made from wailing winds and groaning stones, Theodore Roosevelt National Park. We urge you to stand with us in preserving this iconic herd for generations to come.

A very special thank you to Senators Boschee, Paton, and Rummel along with Representatives Lefor, J. Olson, and Steiner for working with their constituents to introduce this critical resolution to kickstart the essential federal protection process.

Respectfully submitted,

*Deb Lee Carson*

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