

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

March 12, 2019

The Honorable Dan Smith
Acting Director
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Acting Director Smith:

In May 2018 the National Park Service (NPS) announced the unanticipated closure of the floating dock that allows access for visitors to board the USS Arizona Memorial. Initially after inspectors were able to conduct a thorough assessment of the damage to the dock, NPS officials estimated that the dock would be reopened by December 7th, the anniversary of Pearl Harbor. As that date drew nearer, NPS officials then announced that it was no longer feasible for the reopening of the memorial to meet that deadline and instead that the dock would reopen in March 2019.

Now in March 2019, NPS is announcing that the reopening of the dock has yet again been pushed back to a later date to be determined. This announcement is both frustrating and disappointing to the public. The World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, which is home to the USS Arizona Memorial, is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Hawaii having welcomed nearly 1.8 million visitors in 2018 alone. Included in this count are the estimated 2,000 living World War II survivors who are in their nineties, and their families who travel to Hawaii to visit the memorial. The sense of urgency in reopening the memorial cannot be overstated.

Given that the details and timeline for the dock repair have changed numerous times over the past 10 months, and that the most recent announcement by NPS does not include a target date for the reopening of the dock, we request that you provide us with monthly written updates until the floating dock at the USS Arizona Memorial is repaired and reopened to the public. We request that these updates include details on the current status of the project, what has been achieved to date with the project, and what has yet to be achieved, all with corresponding dates of completion or estimated completion. We would like also to receive information on affiliated resources, including staffing and expenses, both to date as well as anticipated, and whether the resources are currently in the agency budget or will need additional funding by the Congress.


Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


MAZIE K. HIRONO
U.S. Senator


BRIAN SCHATZ
U.S. Senator


TULSI GABBARD
U.S. Representative


ED CASE
U.S. Representative