

April 15, 2024

The Honorable James E. Clyburn
1225 Lady Street,
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: National Historic Park Campaign - Julius Rosenwald and Rosenwald Schools

Dear Congressman Clyburn:

I hope this letter finds you well. I am a S.C. 5th-grader in an African centred and affirming homeschool. I am writing to you concerning the Rosenwald National Historical Park Campaign. The campaign proposes a multi-site project that includes creating national parks commemorating the creation of the Rosenwald schools and are to be located at selected restored schools. Through my research in history class, I discovered that of the nearly 5,000 schools built across the South, about 500 of these schools were built in our home state, South Carolina. These schools founded through the collaborative efforts of changemakers, education leader Booker T. Washington and philanthropist and Sears CEO Julius Rosenwald, are a significant yet often overlooked contribution to American history. I was surprised to learn that these southern-based schools educated a third of the African American population at a time when 90% of African Americans lived in the Jim Crow south.

I am passionate about history, social justice and educational equity. I strongly support the National Historical Park campaign for these three reasons: (1) there has been widespread effort at the state level, as you know, to exclude significant portions of American history in public school classrooms, especially in regards to the African American experience. This is highly unfortunate

for my community, our country and future generations, including mine, Generation Alpha. This exclusion and erasure makes support of a national historic park even more urgent. (2) National Historical Parks memorialising the collaboration of Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington in establishing the Rosenwald Schools can serve as a testament to their legacies of selflessness and humanitarianism and serve as an inspiring example for communities. 3) These parks can serve as educational mediums that connect the past with the future by serving as a location to learn and have meaningful dialogues on present issues and the future. (4) Lastly, the parks can serve as an example of intersectionality and what can happen when different communities work together towards a more perfect union benefitting us all.

As a former educator and respected lawmaker, you are well-positioned to influence and see to fruition efforts preserving this piece of America's heritage. Where acknowledgement of this history falls short in the public education system, a public place dedicated to living history through landmarks and sites is important and can raise the profile of this and other similar efforts. I realise that this is an important matter to you as well. I would like to thank you for your past efforts in preserving the historic St. George Rosenwald School in Dorchester County. I now respectfully urge you to continue to champion this effort and include it in your upcoming legislative discussions.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter. I look forward to your continued support.

Sincerely,

A Generation Alpha Constituent