

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 149

To designate the Peter J. McGuire Memorial and Peter J. McGuire Gravesite located in Pennsauken, New Jersey, as a National Historic Landmark, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 4, 2021

Mr. NORCROSS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

To designate the Peter J. McGuire Memorial and Peter J. McGuire Gravesite located in Pennsauken, New Jersey, as a National Historic Landmark, 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 the “Peter J. McGuire  
5       Labor Day Landmark Act”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Peter J. McGuire joined the Cabinet Mak-  
2           ers Union of New York in 1872 and, recognizing the  
3           need for one international union of wood workers,  
4           called for and led a convention of carpenters and  
5           joiners in Chicago in 1881 that formed the Brother-  
6           hood of Carpenters and Joiners which became the  
7           United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of  
8           America in 1888.

9           (2) The Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners  
10          elected McGuire its first general secretary and re-  
11          tained him in that position for twenty years.

12          (3) McGuire was a leader in convincing skept-  
13          tical, locally minded union activists around the  
14          United States that a national labor federation was  
15          not only necessary, but also possible.

16          (4) McGuire co-founded with Samuel Gompers  
17          the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor  
18          Unions and, in 1886, reorganized it into the Amer-  
19          ican Federation of Labor.

20          (5) McGuire served variously as the American  
21          Federation of Labor secretary and vice president be-  
22          tween 1886 and 1900.

23          (6) McGuire successfully led the fight for the  
24          eight-hour day in 1890.

1           (7) In 1882, McGuire proposed that “one day  
2           in the year be designated as Labor Day”, a proposal  
3           that was adopted first by a number of States and  
4           then as the first Monday in September by an Act of  
5           Congress in 1894.

6           (8) Upon McGuire’s death in 1906, the United  
7           Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners commis-  
8           sioned from M.C. Lyons and Sons, Camden, and had  
9           installed a massive granite multistage headstone on  
10          McGuire’s gravesite in the Arlington Cemetery at  
11          1629 Cove Road, Pennsauken, New Jersey, inscribed  
12          with “P.J. MCGUIRE, BORN JULY 6, 1852  
13          DIED FEB. 18, 1906” and “FOUNDER OF U.B.  
14          OF C. & J. OF A.”.

15          (9) Beginning in 1906, each year labor leaders,  
16          political leaders, families, and working people gather  
17          at McGuire’s gravesite on Labor Day to lay wreaths  
18          and deliver speeches in tribute to McGuire and his  
19          great work.

20          (10) As the anniversary of McGuire’s centennial  
21          birthday approached, the organizations he had  
22          helped to found decided to install a new memorial a  
23          short distance from McGuire’s gravesite, consisting  
24          of a central statue of McGuire embraced by a semi-  
25          circular colonnade of marble columns.

1           (11) The Peter J. McGuire Memorial, com-  
2       pleted in 1952, includes—

3           (A) an outdoor sculpture of McGuire,  
4       made of Cherokee Georgia marble, that shows  
5       him standing with his left arm against his chest  
6       and right arm, elbow bent, at his waist, and  
7       dressed in a frock or mourning coat;

8           (B) an inscription carved on front of the  
9       base of such sculpture that reads “PETER J.  
10      MCGUIRE/JULY 6, 1852/FEBRUARY 18,  
11      1906”;

12          (C) a free-standing curvilinear colonnade  
13      of six Greek Doric columns, also made of Cher-  
14      okee Georgia marble;

15          (D) an inscription on entablature frieze of  
16      the colonnade that reads “IN MEMORY OF  
17      PETER J. MCGUIRE FOUNDER OF UBC  
18      AND FATHER OF LABOR DAY”; and

19          (E) an inscription on the base of the col-  
20      onnade that reads “ERECTED BY UNITED  
21      BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS AND  
22      JOINERS OF AMERICA 1952”.

23          (12) Several thousand people, many of them or-  
24      dinary union members, attended the Peter J.

1 McGuire Memorial dedication ceremony on August  
2 9, 1952, which featured as speakers—

3 (A) the president of the New Jersey Fed-  
4 eration of Labor;

5 (B) the mayors of Camden and Penn-  
6 sauken;

7 (C) General President Hutcheson of the  
8 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners;

9 (D) the president of the American Federa-  
10 tion of Labor, William Green;

11 (E) the secretary and treasurer of the  
12 American Federation of Labor, George Meany,  
13 who later attained national significance himself;  
14 and

15 (F) the United States Secretary of Labor,  
16 Maurice Tobin.

17 (13) In 1956, when a new postage stamp dedi-  
18 cated to American labor was issued on Labor Day,  
19 President Dwight Eisenhower held a special cere-  
20 mony at the White House in which he met with the  
21 family and descendants of McGuire.

22 (14) In 2004, McGuire was admitted to the  
23 Labor Hall of Fame of the United States Depart-  
24 ment of Labor, which has since been renamed the  
25 Hall of Honor.

1           (15) The New Jersey Historic Preservation Of-  
2       fice has documented McGuire as a figure of tran-  
3       scendent national significance and importance in the  
4       labor history of the United States.

5           (16) The landscape characteristics, physical fea-  
6       tures, overall layout, and visual appearance of the  
7       Peter J. McGuire Memorial and Peter J. McGuire  
8       Gravesite reflect a high degree of overall integrity in  
9       terms of location, design, setting, materials, and  
10      workmanship.

11          (17) The sculptural representations of labor  
12      and union themes associated with McGuire's career  
13      as an effective labor leader and organizer that em-  
14      bellish the Peter J. McGuire Memorial and Peter J.  
15      McGuire Gravesite are intact and well-preserved.

16          (18) National political and labor leaders have  
17      made annual pilgrimages to McGuire's gravesite  
18      since 1906 and to the Peter J. McGuire Memorial  
19      and Peter J. McGuire Gravesite every September on  
20      Labor Day or the Friday before Labor Day since  
21      1952.

22          (19) Unlike other known properties related to  
23      McGuire, the Peter J. McGuire Memorial and Peter  
24      J. McGuire Gravesite are the only properties that re-  
25      tain both the necessary direct association with

McGuire as a person of national stature and the high level of integrity required for listing on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places and National Register of Historic Places.

(20) The Peter J. McGuire Memorial and Peter J. McGuire Gravesite satisfy the criteria for graves of historical figures and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years under the following criteria consideration categories of the National Register of Historic Places—

(A) category (c), “a grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance as there is no appropriate site or building associated with McGuire’s productive life”; and

(B) category (f), “a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance”.

(21) In August 2017, the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office certified that the Peter J. McGuire Memorial and Peter J. McGuire Gravesite are eligible for listing on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places and National Register of Historic Places.

1           (22) On August 22, 2018, the Peter J.  
2       McGuire Memorial and Peter J. McGuire Gravesite  
3       were added to the New Jersey Register of Historic  
4       Places and, subsequently, on January 17, 2019,  
5       added to the National Register of Historic Places.

6   **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF PETER J. MCGUIRE MEMORIAL**  
7                           **NATIONAL COMMEMORATIVE SITE.**

8       (a) DESIGNATION.—The Peter J. McGuire Memorial  
9       and Peter J. McGuire Gravesite, located in Pennsauken,  
10      New Jersey, is designated as the Peter J. McGuire Memo-  
11      rial National Commemorative Site.

12      (b) EFFECT OF DESIGNATION.—The Commemora-  
13      tive Site shall not be considered to be a unit of the Na-  
14      tional Park System.

15      (c) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary  
16      may enter into cooperative agreements with appropriate  
17      public or private entities for the purposes of providing edu-  
18      cational and interpretive facilities and programs for the  
19      public regarding the Peter J. McGuire Memorial National  
20      Commemorative Site.

21      (d) TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—The  
22      Secretary may provide technical and financial assistance  
23      to any entity with which the Secretary has entered into  
24      a cooperative agreement under subsection (c).



1       (e) NO EFFECT ON ACTIONS OF PROPERTY OWN-  
2   ERS.—Designation of the Peter J. McGuire Memorial Na-  
3   tional Commemorative Site shall not prohibit any actions  
4   which may otherwise be taken by any property owners,  
5   including the owners of the Peter J. McGuire Memorial  
6   National Commemorative Site, with respect to their prop-  
7   erty.

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