



NATIONAL PARK HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

# NEWS

Contact: Derrick Crandall, (202) 682-9530

## Concessioner Armand Ortega Testifies at House Hearing on Second Century of National Parks



*NPS Director Jon Jarvis (L) and Armand Ortega (R)*

Armand Ortega, President of Ortega Family Enterprises of Santa Fe, New Mexico, testified in Washington, D.C., on May 25 before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on National Parks, National Forests and Public Lands at a hearing also featuring National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis and prominent members of the National Parks Second Century Commission. The hearing – *Building on America's Best Idea: The Next Century of the National Park System* – sought suggestions for how the National Park Service could mark its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016 with programs and policies keeping national parks cherished and

relevant over the next century. The hearing was chaired by U.S. Representative Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ).

Mr. Ortega, whose company serves visitors to three national park units in New Mexico and Muir Woods National Monument in California, reminded Members of Congress that concessioners began meeting the needs of park visitors more than 130 years ago and today, with an estimated 25,000 employees in parks, provide more than \$1 billion annually in goods and services. He said that concessioners are proud of past and present partnership efforts with the agency to make visits memorable and safe and are fully committed to continuing and expanding cooperative efforts in 2016 and beyond.

Mr. Ortega told the Congressional panel that concessioners had valuable insight into park visitor wants and needs, and that concessioners could also lead efforts to reach

(more)

## **Concessioner Armand Ortega Testifies at House Hearing on Second Century of National Parks**

### **Add One**

out to Americans who now rarely visit parks, in partnership with state tourism agencies and gateway communities. He also called on the Congress to help the National Park Service work with concessioners to create well-designed, LEED-certified visitor facilities which would serve parks and visitors as well over the next 100 years as the Ahwahnee Hotel, El Tovar and other concessioner-built structures have over the past century.

Earlier, National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis told the well-attended Congressional hearing that concessioners are essential and needed partners in serving visitors to the national parks, and can play a vital role in the future of the National Park System.

Mr. Ortega's testimony and the testimony of other witnesses at the hearing are available at: [http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_jcalpro&Itemid=27&extmode=view&extid=362](http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/index.php?option=com_jcalpro&Itemid=27&extmode=view&extid=362).

*The National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) is the national trade association of the businesses that provide lodging, food services, gifts and souvenirs, equipment rentals, transportation and other visitor services in the National Park System. There are nearly 600 concessioner operations in the 392 national park units. Today, national park concessioners have over 25,000 employees in the parks and provide nearly half of all park visitors with goods and services. The more than \$1 billion in annual economic activity produces tens of millions of dollars in resources to care for the parks. Concessioners also assist in many park interpretive and environmental protection efforts. Information on park concessioners is available at [www.parkpartners.org](http://www.parkpartners.org).*