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## **Congressman Cohen Introduces the Evaluatin Lynching Locations for National Parks Sites Act**

*LSP Board President Rich Watkins will testify in the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests,  
and Public Lands legislative hearing on H.R. 7912.*

July 14, 2022

MEMPHIS, TN - The Lynching Sites Project of Memphis (LSP) Board President, Rich Watkins, will testify before the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands at a legislative hearing on H. R. 7912. This hearing is scheduled to be held on July 14, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. ET in 1324 Longworth House Office Building and via WebEx. The hearing will be live-streamed on the Committee's [YouTube page](#).

Congressman Steve Cohen (TN-09), a member of the House Committee on Natural Rescouces, introduced the [Evaluating Lynching Locations for National Park Sites Act](#) on May 31, 2022. This measure directs the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the National Park Service, to evaluate lynching sites within approximately 100 miles of Memphis, TN for potential inclusion in the National Park System.

One such site is where Ell Persons was murdered. Persons was beaten into confessing to the killing of a white girl in 1917, taken from police custody, and then burned, decapitated and dismembered in front of an estimated crowd of 3,000 people who congregated on Macon Road near the Wolf River in Memphis.

Congressman Cohen made the following statement: “Unfortunately, there are many examples of lynching violence in our country’s history. Including these sites as part of our National Park System is an important step to remember the victims and to learn from the past so that it is never repeated.”

Rich Watkins, Board President of the Lynching Sites Project of Memphis, endorsed the legislation saying, “We believe the report that will come from this Act will help our region openly face its history of racial violence so that we can heal and grow.”

Anti-lynching crusader and publisher Ida B. Wells expressed another reason when she said, “The way to right wrongs is to shine the light of truth on them.”

The Lynching Sites Project of Memphis believes that if Memphians together can face the horror and terror of lynchings head-on, people will be empowered to face all the other challenges in Memphis with courage, humility, and hope.

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