

Designate Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument



UNITING OUR NATION & ADVANCING RACIAL JUSTICE THROUGH A NATIONAL MONUMENT

Starting on August 14, 1908, a White mob attacked and lynched Black residents of Springfield, Illinois, and burned their homes within blocks of the former home of Abraham Lincoln. As one of the country's worst examples of mass racial violence, the Springfield Race Riot generated outrage, which led to the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909.

Thanks to the leadership of the Springfield Branch of the NAACP and the local Springfield community, the City of Springfield and the HSHS St. John's Hospital have pledged to donate land to the United States to establish a National Monument to mark the events of the Springfield Race Riots. The City property includes objects of historic interest including the foundations of Black homes that were burned in the riot.

The Springfield community is urging President Biden to designate the site of the race riot in Springfield as a National Monument through the Antiquities Act to acknowledge this terrible chapter in our history and to help our nation heal and learn. With Executive action, President Biden can fill a critical gap in the National Park Service. Designating a National Monument will help unite our nation, advance racial justice and build on the legacy of Abraham Lincoln and the founders of the NAACP.

The monument enjoys bipartisan support

- In 2020, Congress passed bipartisan legislation to authorize a Special Resource Study (SRS). The National Park Service (NPS) found in that completed study that the site meets NPS criteria to be added to the Park System.
- In 2020, Department of Interior Secretary David Bernhardt added the site to the African American Civil Rights Network.
- In 2023, the Illinois Congressional delegation introduced bills to designate a National Monument (S. 384 and H.R. 2415).
- In September 2023, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee approved S. 384 via unanimous voice vote, sending it to the full Senate for consideration.



The Springfield site would be the first national park to tell the story of Ida B. Wells-Barnett (pictured above). Her famous 1908 speech, "Lynching Our National Crime," addressed the tragic events in Springfield. The Springfield site holds objects of historic interest including the remaining foundations of Black homes (pictured right) that help document these tragic events and tell a fuller story of American history.

Monument Supporters

- **American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois - Springfield Chapter**
- **Black Lives Matter Springfield**
- **Delta Sigma Theta - Springfield-Decatur Area Alumni Chapter**
- **Fever River Research**
- **Lincoln Presidential Foundation**
- **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People**
- **National Religious Partnership for the Environment**
- **Prince Hall Mason of Central Lodge #3**
- **Sierra Club**
- **Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum**
- **Coalition to Protect America's National Parks**

