

Week 7

This week's journal is inspired by the intersection of work and personal activities. I had the opportunity to attend two congressional hearings in moderately official capacities, a half-day long affair which I had previously been privy too. This combined with the normal work of being the most senior intern made my days busy, but entirely engaging. Serving as a juxtaposition to this, my weekend was filled with events entirely detached from work – which served not only as a means of release but also the joys which compliment productivity. For now, and the sake of structure, I will focus on the work I performed during the week. I have always been keenly aware of the work of committees on the Hill, was well aware of the process of mark-ups and hearing which spell the doom of most Bills proposed in Congress. It was not until this week however that I was finally exposed to their (however tedious at times) imperative nature. Walking into the large hall seemed alien – not at all the way it seems in C-span. It was curiously smaller, more intimate, and not unlike other rooms I had seen. That same sense of similarity remained, however oddly considering the scope of the bills they were having the hearing. Here and now, the future of thousands of acres of federal lands were being decided – whether they will be given the protection of being labeled wild lands. My second hearing seemed a bit more like how they are televised – the room was larger, and more representatives were present and ready to use the opportunity to poke holes in the legislation. Whether this was due to the different types of legislation, the different cultures of the subcommittees, or another factor I cannot pin down I do not know. In any case, it was exciting to see the partisan conflict, the regulated and more polite ideological debate was odd to see in contrast to the nature of such conflict in digital realms or passionate yelling matches. I was happy to have a break from this work by celebrating the birthday of a fellow intern, Metzin. And while I was not surprised to be the only one on time to the restaurant, I had a great time the rest of the night with the interns – whether it was enjoying the view from the Kennedy Center terrace or serving as the go-to male perspective for romantic deliberations, the night certainly was eventful. I woke up the next morning knowing I was in need for one of my natural detoxes – a common practice

which I have adhered to since I first began having to balance the effort of work and play. I took a 45-minute metro ride to the last stop of the Greenline to find myself in the closest national park to DC – Greenbelt National. As I altered from running and walking the trails, I was happy to feel my mind empty. On the way back from my adventure I felt reinvigorated to finish up my internship with intention – so I can report no regret during my life changing time in DC.



LEFT

The only photo I have during the Hearing on Land Conservation. My eyes are closed only because I wanted to concentrate on what my member was saying, I promise!

RIGHT

View from the Mount Vernon Biking Trail. Renting a bike and taking the trail past DC into Old Town Alexandria this Friday was definitely the one of the most fun workouts I've done!

