

October 4, 2013

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thinking About Our Federal Government's Shutdown

It appears that there are a lot more people worried about what the country can do for them...

Regarding your editorial "[A GOP Shutdown Strategy](#)" (Oct. 2): The national parks have been shut down, but George Washington's home at Mount Vernon is open because it is privately owned and operated. A volunteer organization, the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, was formed in 1853 to restore and maintain George Washington's home and grounds. By any account, the association has done a magnificent job. The grounds and structures are pristine and the environment well protected. Each year improvements are made in both visitor services and exhibit expansion to give a more complete record of the life of George Washington and his times. All of this is done without taxpayer funding. The home, exhibit halls, gardens and land are supported through reasonable attendance fees and private donations.

The federal government should draw a lesson from this and lease our national parks for a token fee to both nonprofit and profit-making organizations that have shown a capability to manage environmentally and historically sensitive areas, while improving the user experience at reasonable cost. This would be a win-win for both the taxpayers and those who enjoy our national parks.

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http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304176904579111322375231300.html?mod=rss_mobile_uber_feed