



SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

September 20, 2021

The Honorable Joe Manchin III
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Manchin and Ranking Member Barrasso:

The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) strongly supports the nomination of Mrs. Sara Bronin as chairwoman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and urges your committee to approve the nomination as quickly as possible.

The SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With nearly 7,000 members, SAA represents professional and avocational archaeologists, archaeology students in colleges and universities, and archaeologists working at Tribal agencies, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members in throughout the U.S., as well as in many nations around the world.

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) is the cornerstone statute of federal preservation law. The Section 106 review process established by the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the impact of projects they carry out, fund or approve on our nation's irreplaceable historic resources, including archaeological sites and materials. The ACHP plays a key role in the oversight and implementation of that process, and also does much more at the federal, state, tribal and local levels to ensure the effective protection and preservation of America's cultural heritage. As such, the position of chair of the ACHP requires not only an expert in the many facets of preservation work—from historic buildings and other structures to cultural landscapes and archaeological sites - but someone who also is able to communicate with the highly varied stakeholders involved in this important issue—from government agencies to non-profits, from Native American tribes to concerned citizens groups.

The SAA believes that Professor Bronin is highly qualified for the position. She is an architect and attorney whose career has been spent at the cutting edge of protecting historic assets while also preparing them and the communities they are part of for the challenges of tomorrow. In particular, her published articles and work in Hartford reflects a thorough and well-rounded understanding of how to balance the needs of preservation of the past with those of the people who live there today, including those whose voices have traditionally gone unheard. If historic preservation is to mean anything, it must reflect the experiences of all of those who have called this nation home, and we believe the Mrs. Bronin will carry out this important task.

The SAA believes that Mrs. Bronin will be an effective leader for the ACHP, and we urge the Committee to approve her nomination.

Sincerely,

Deborah L. Nichols, Ph.D., RPA
President

