

December 24, 2013

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairman
Appropriations Committee
S-128 United States Capitol Building
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
S-146A United States Capitol Building
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment
and Related Agencies
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Mikulski and Reed and Ranking Members Shelby and Murkowski:

We write asking that you support economic development, job creation and our national heritage by appropriating at least \$58.91 million in funding for the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) for FY14. The request is based upon FY12 funding amounts for State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs) and also supports the President's FY14 request of \$3 million for a competitive program to help survey and identify historic resources important to underrepresented populations. We also appreciate the Senate's proposed \$10 million competitive historic preservation grant program.

SHPOs and THPOs are funded through the HPF and form the backbone of our Nation's historic preservation programs. Together these programs provide the tools needed to revitalize, rehabilitate, and protect the places that give meaning to our great nation. For the many SHPOs that recently experienced 20 to 40 percent reductions in State funding, any additional reduction in federal funding will mean immediate personnel lay-offs resulting in delayed reviews of federal undertakings and certification of Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit projects which have leveraged \$106 billion in private investment since 1981.

The negative impact of reduced funding will exacerbate the already underfunded THPO program. Today 150 Indian tribes operate THPO programs that work to protect cultural resources on and off tribal lands. These programs have assumed the SHPO responsibilities for their respective tribal communities and serve a critical function in the approval process for both federal projects and basic local infrastructure activities like septic and waterline installations and school construction. The anticipated addition of new THPOs by the National Park Service in fiscal year 2014, coupled with reduced funding, will represent the lowest funding per THPO in the program's eighteen year history, guaranteeing the loss of jobs, delayed federal and local reviews, and loss of important cultural assets.

The National Historic Preservation Act also calls for HPF funds to be utilized as grants to assist communities in preserving their heritage. We request that the Committee do all that it can to both meet the Administration's request of \$3 million for a competitive grant program serving underrepresented populations and to the extent feasible the Senate's \$10 million FY14 request for a competitive restoration grant program.

Without adequate funding, America's national treasures will be forever lost. The HPF is the primary, and in many communities the only, means to ensure appropriate implementation of our nation's historic preservation laws and the only way to adequately safeguard our historic resources. For nearly the past half century, the HPF has enabled successful federal-state and federal-tribal partnerships that have helped preserve historic sites and communities throughout the nation. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

American Cultural Resources Association
Archaeological Institute of America
National Alliance of Preservation Commissions
National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers
National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Preservation Action
Society for American Archaeology
Society for Historical Archaeology
US/International Council on Monuments and Sites