



June 27, 2011

The Honorable Gary R. Herbert
Governor
Utah State Capitol Complex
350 North State Street, Suite 200
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-2220

Dear Governor Herbert,

I write to you as the President of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) to express our concern over the recent layoffs of the State Archaeologist, Deputy State Archaeologist, and Physical Anthropologist in the State Antiquities Office.

The SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to the research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With more than 7,000 members, SAA represents professional archaeologists in colleges and universities, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members in all 50 states, including Utah, as well as many other nations around the world.

The SAA notes that the abundant prehistoric and historic archaeological sites in Utah are important part of the state's historical heritage, and a vital part of the cultural tourism that is an important component of the state's economy. In addition to being important to the people of Utah, these archaeological sites also have national significance.

We urge you to seek replacements or otherwise provide for the functions fulfilled by the key positions in the Antiquities Section that were eliminated to ensure the long-term and secure management of archaeological data for all state and federal agencies in Utah. We think it is important for the State of Utah to make it possible for the Antiquities section to carry out all its required duties, including overseeing permits for archaeological sites and operating the human remains-repatriation program. We also advise you that it is unlikely that the State of Utah will be able to find a single qualified person to fulfill all the functions formerly provided by the State Archaeologist, Deputy State Archaeologist, and Physical Anthropologist.

The positions that were eliminated are also essential in providing the public outreach and education that every State concerned with historic preservation and heritage management needs to do. The Antiquities Section is well-known for its work with Utah

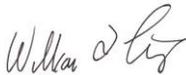
Archaeology Week, its educational outreach to youth groups and school children, and for providing overarching advice to the statewide avocational archaeological society. These public educational functions are important. We think the Governor's Office needs to develop the means for the Antiquities Section to continue to "promote research, study, and activities in the field of antiquities" (Utah Code Title 9, Chapter 8, Section 304 2a).

The Antiquities Section has a long history of respectful and lawful recovery of Native American human remains discovered on all non-federal lands in Utah, and in determining cultural affiliation in accordance with the state burial law. These functions, which require a qualified forensic anthropologist, must continue in order for Utah to afford respect to all the people buried in the State, in accordance with State law.

Finally, the Antiquities Section provides the public with official source of information about the significant archaeological resources in the state, as well as providing advice to state and local governmental agencies that lack agency archaeologists and thus have no source for guidance about how to deal with archaeological management issues. We urge the Governor's Office to find a way for the Antiquities Section to continue to "provide advice on the protection and orderly development of archaeological resources" (Utah Code Title 9, Chapter 8, Section 304 2d).

The SAA wants to support the remaining Antiquities Section employees who remain in wake of staff reduction, and we urge the Governor's Office to make a commitment to continued support of all four of the above functions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William F. Limp".

William F. Limp, Ph.D.
President