



Chairman Hal Rogers
 House Committee on Appropriations
 Room H-305
 The Capitol
 Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Thad Cochran
 Senate Committee on Appropriations
 Room S-128
 The Capitol
 Washington, DC 20510

December 10, 2015

Dear Chairmen Rogers and Cochran:

In a time when the Islamic State is destroying World Heritage sites to further their terrorist agenda, we write to ask your support for a limited waiver that would allow the United States to pay its annual dues to the UNESCO World Heritage committee. U.S. dues total less than \$1 million per year, and those funds will leverage hundreds of millions of dollars in economic development here at home.

In 2011, the U.S. stopped paying its annual dues because of UNESCO's decision to admit Palestine as a member. A limited waiver that would allow for payment of just the World Heritage portion of our UNESCO dues passed the Senate Appropriations committee in 2013, but it ultimately did not become law. Payment of dues is important now to stand in solidarity with the civilized world against terrorists, and also to catalyze economic development in states that have sites eligible to receive the World Heritage designation. Without our payment of dues, the U.S. sites under consideration for the World Heritage designation will fall to the back of the line.

The World Heritage List recognizes the world's most outstanding cultural and natural properties with universal value to humanity. The San Antonio Missions were awarded World Heritage status this year. The honor of this recognition also brings additional economic benefits to Texas: an estimated 1098 local jobs, \$38 million in wages and salaries, \$105

million in overall spending and \$5.1 million in State and local tax revenue. The nomination of the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks of Ohio is currently underway. World Heritage designation of the Hopewell sites would increase tourism and result in \$21 million in additional wages, over \$5 million in state and local tax revenues, and \$100 million in additional spending annually to fuel the state's economy.

It is more important than ever for the U.S. to stand on the side of civilization and preserving heritage for future generations. Please support a limited waiver for payment of our UNESCO World Heritage dues.

Best regards,

American Alliance of Museums
American Cultural Resources Association
Archaeological Institute of America
Heritage Ohio
Ohio Archaeological Council
Ohio History Connection
Preservation Action
Society for American Archaeology
Society for Historical Archaeology
National Alliance of Preservation Commissions
National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers
National Trust for Historic Preservation
U.S. National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites