

April 23, 2018

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

Thank you for the \$97.9 million the committee provided from the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) in the FY18 omnibus appropriations bill. This historic level of investment will ensure that state and tribal historic preservation officers have the funds necessary to implement the nation's preservation program, including providing assistance to the federal historic tax credit program, which the Congress retained in the recent tax bill.

In addition, several HPF competitive grants programs provide funds essential for state and local governments, and other organizations, to ensure that significant properties are rehabilitated and the stories of all Americans are interpreted.

As we look to the FY19 appropriations process, we are heartened by these investments and request that you consider allocating from the \$150 million annually deposited into the HPF from federal off-shore mineral revenues modest increases from the FY18 levels for a total FY19 HPF appropriation of \$110.5 million, including:

- **\$55 million for State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs)** for heritage preservation and protection programs that create jobs, economic development, and community revitalization, including \$2 million for a new competitive grant program to survey and digitize America's historic and cultural resources. FY18 funding: \$48.925 million

In partnership with the federal government, SHPOs carry out the primary functions of the National Historic Preservation Act, including finding and documenting America's historic places, making nominations to the National Register, providing assistance on federal historic tax credit projects, reviewing impacts of federal projects through the section 106 process, working with local governments, and conducting preservation education and planning. Additional funding to support survey and GIS mapping of historic sites will facilitate efficient infrastructure project reviews and improve project planning to avoid unnecessary conflicts that can slow project delivery timelines.

- **\$15 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs)** to carry out the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act. The request includes \$2 million for a new competitive grant program to survey and digitize tribal historic and cultural resource information, which will result in better maps to inform planned developments,

as well as to provide tribes with the tools to better manage their own resources. FY18 funding: \$11.4 million

THPOs are federally recognized tribal governments that have entered into an agreement with the Department of the Interior to assume the federal compliance role of the SHPO on their respective Tribal lands. THPOs are actively involved with projects to improve Indian schools, roads, health clinics, and housing.

- **\$15 million for Civil Rights Movement** competitive grants to document, interpret, and preserve historical sites associated with the Civil Rights Movement. FY18 funding: \$13 million.
- **\$15 million for Save America's Treasures** grants for the preservation of nationally significant sites, structures and artifacts. After a lapse of seven years, this program began receiving funding again in FY17. FY18 funding: \$13 million.
- **\$5 million for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)** grants to preserve and repair historic buildings on HBCU campuses. FY18 funding: \$5 million.
- **\$5 million for preservation grants to revitalize historic properties** of national, State, and local significance. FY18 funding: \$5 million
- **\$500,000 for communities underrepresented on the National Register** to survey and inventory properties. FY18 funding: \$500,000

We greatly appreciate the strong support Congress has shown for our nation's historic preservation programs in its FY18 allocation from the Historic Preservation Fund. We look forward to working with the Committee as it considers these requests.

Sincerely,

National Trust for Historic Preservation
National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers
National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers
Coalition for American Heritage
American Cultural Resources Association
Society for Historical Archaeology
Society for American Archaeology
American Anthropological Association
Preservation Action