

April 1, 2019

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
2256 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment and
Related Agencies
1124 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman McCollum and Ranking Member Joyce:

We write requesting that you support economic development, job creation, and our national heritage by appropriating \$141 million in funding for the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. Of the total we request that \$60 million support State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), \$20 million support Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs), \$5 million fund a competitive grant program for State or Tribal Historic Preservation Offices to invest in geographic information systems-based mapping of historic resources, \$15 million fund the Save America's Treasures grant program, and \$1 million go toward a competitive grant program to survey and document historic resources. We also request that \$30 million for grants to preserve the sites and stories of efforts to advance civil rights in underrepresented communities, provided that \$20 million go toward preserving the sites and stories of the African American Civil Rights movement and \$10 million for competitive grants for Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

SHPOs and THPOs tie our nation's historic preservation programs together. SHPOs carry out the National Historic Preservation Act, which provides citizens the tools they need to revitalize, rehabilitate, and protect American heritage. Annually, SHPOs also review more than 100,000 federal undertakings for their impact on historic resources and survey more than 16.5 million acres for cultural resources. SHPOs also administer the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit which, over the life of the program, has created more than 2.4 million jobs and leveraged more than \$131 billion in private investment.

THPOs carry out many of the same functions as SHPOs for tribal governments. Just as the SHPOs review federal undertakings on state lands, the THPOs review federal undertakings on tribal government lands. There were only 12 THPOs when they first received funding in 1996. Today, there nearly 200 THPOs and funding has not kept pace with the growing number of THPOs; in 2018, 179 tribes received an average of \$64,000 in funding, nearly \$20,000 fewer than when the program first started.

Additionally, we support \$30 million for competitive grants to fund the continuation of a Civil Rights initiative that preserves, documents, and interprets the sites and stories of the

underrepresented communities, provided that \$20 million be specifically set aside for the African American Civil Rights movement.

Funding these historic preservation programs is vital for ensuring that the unvarnished story of America is told. It is an investment in towns and cities throughout the country that benefit from tourists visiting historic sites and the public and private investment in restoring historic buildings. This funding is both an economic and historical imperative that creates construction jobs and protects historic resources that might otherwise be lost forever.

If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Jon Bosworth in Rep. Blumenauer's office (Jon.Bosworth@mail.house.gov) or Jeffrey Wilson in Rep. Turner's office (Jeffrey.Wilson@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress