

Support funding for core programs of the Historic Preservation Fund

Dear Colleague:

We need your help to maintain funding for the core programs of the Historic Preservation Fund. Increased funding for State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs) the Save America's Treasures (SAT) and Preserve America programs are needed for continued investment in preserving America's legacy. **We ask that you agree to sign the attached letter to the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee requesting the funding of SHPOs at \$50 million, the THPOs at \$12 million, to increase the SAT to its historic funding levels of \$30 million and maintain the President's request of \$10 million for Preserve America.**

Our nation's history reveals much about our character and our culture; it is revealed in both written records of our achievements and in the places that are important in telling the story of those accomplishments. Protecting and preserving these special places - reminders of the events and people that shaped this country- creates a bridge that connects our past with our future and helps to guide our vision of the future with the wisdom of past experience.

While most agree that preserving our heritage is important, the funding for these important programs has declined rapidly in past years. From 2002 to 2006, the Save America's Treasures Program was funded at around \$30 million. In 2007, the funding dropped to \$12.6 million and the President only requested \$10 million in his budget for 2008. Both the State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices have been chronically under funded and require an increase in funds to continue the invaluable work that they are doing to preserve America's legacy. We request a \$14.3 million increase for State Historic Preservation Offices and a \$8 million increase for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices.

We recognize the budgetary constraints under which the Subcommittee is operating, but fully funding these historic preservation programs would represent a true investment in America's legacy. Federal funding would be multiplied many times over through public-private economic partnerships and ventures. Perhaps most importantly, it would ensure the protection of hundreds of historic structures and sites throughout the nation that might otherwise pass from our shared heritage.

To sign on to the letter, your staff may contact Erin Collinson with Senator Durbin at 4-5519 or Patrick Woodcock with Senator Snowe at 4-4227. **The deadline to sign this letter is Friday, April 20th.**

Sincerely,

Senator Richard Durbin

Senator Olympia Snowe

April 13, 2007

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Interior and Related Agencies
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Larry E. Craig
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Interior and Related Agencies
123 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Feinstein and Ranking Member Craig:

We are writing to ask your support for the nation's core historic preservation programs by funding State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) at \$50 million, Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs) at \$12 million, Save America's Treasures (SAT) at \$30 million, and support the President's request to fund Preserve America at \$10 million. Lack of funding over many years is preventing the SHPOs, THPOs, and anyone involved in protecting our heritage from fully implementing the activities Congress intended under the National Historic Preservation Act, now in its 40th year.

SHPOs provide the foundation for the nation's historic preservation program by identifying America's historic places, nominating them to the National Register, revitalizing them through rehabilitation tax credits and protecting them for future generations. The SHPOs serve as the primary link between the federal programs and the very communities, business interests, and citizens these programs are designed to benefit. Funding for SHPOs returns the federal investment by leveraging additional dollars through creating local jobs, fostering non-federal contributions and securing long-term economic development. THPOs provide these services and functions on tribal lands exclusively. The number of THPOs has steadily increased over the years while their funding has remained essentially flat. As a result, they struggle to perform their mandated functions and preserve historic tribal sites.

SAT provides the only "bricks-and-mortar" funding for historic preservation projects nationwide. The President's FY2008 budget only recommended \$10 million for SAT. This amount is approximately one third of the \$30 million funding level that the program enjoyed between FY2002 and FY2006. The federal money granted to Save America's Treasures is leveraged and matched with non-federal dollars through public-private economic partnerships and joint ventures. It is important that we restore appropriate funding to this vital program.

Preserve America promotes heritage tourism and educational grants. We urge you to support the President's request for \$10 million to fund the Preserve America program.

Fully funding these historic preservation programs would represent a true investment in America's legacy multiplied many times over through public-private economic partnerships and ventures. Most importantly, it would ensure the protection of historic resources nationwide that might otherwise be lost forever.

Sincerely,

Senator Richard J. Durbin

Senator Olympia Snowe