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Preservation

John M. Fowler
Executive Director



Preserving America's Heritage

July 27, 2015

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Senator Cantwell:

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) wishes to express its strong support for the permanent reauthorization of the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), as proposed in Section 5003 of the recently introduced Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015.

Established by the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 300101 et seq.) (NHPA), the ACHP is an independent federal agency charged with advising the President and Congress on historic preservation matters. One of the ACHP's primary functions is to oversee implementation of Section 106 of the NHPA, which establishes the review process for federal actions that affect historic properties. In that capacity in particular, the ACHP works closely with the State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs). The HPF provides critical funding for SHPOs and THPOs as well as other important preservation program needs.

Most recently at its regular quarterly meeting on July 15, 2015, the ACHP unanimously expressed support for reauthorization of the HPF as proposed in the National Historic Preservation Amendments Act (H.R. 2817). In addition, at its regular quarterly meeting on July 17, 2014, the members of the ACHP unanimously adopted a motion supporting full and permanent funding for the HPF at the authorized level of \$150 million annually, beginning in Fiscal Year 2016.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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The text of the latter adopted motion reads as follows:

**MOTION ON FULL FUNDING FOR
THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND**

*Adopted by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, July 17, 2014*

Whereas, the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) established by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) funds a broad range of activities carried out by State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs), including maintaining qualified staff to meet Section 106, Tax Act, preservation planning, and other key duties as part of the national historic preservation program; and

Whereas, although the HPF is authorized at \$150 million annually, funding has never reached this level and considerably lower annual appropriations continue to have extremely negative impacts on the ability of SHPOs and especially THPOs to maintain effective organizations and carry out their responsibilities under NHPA; and

Whereas, the ACHP, federal agencies, and stakeholders have a critical interest in ensuring that SHPOs and THPOs are funded at levels sufficient to ensure their effective participation in Section 106 consultation as well as in other national priorities such as energy development and infrastructure permitting, disaster planning and resilience, climate change adaptation, military readiness and national security needs, and public lands management; and

Whereas, SHPOs and THPOs also need predictable funding to continue to identify properties worthy of preservation and manage such information with modern digital technology;

Now, therefore, the ACHP strongly encourages the Administration to seek full and permanent funding of the HPF at its authorized level in the President's budget for FY 2016 and beyond.

We believe your proposal to reauthorize the HPF as part of the Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015 is an important first step in ensuring the continuation and sustainability of critically needed historic preservation funding support, and we greatly appreciate its inclusion.

Thank you. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, or if the ACHP can be of any assistance during further consideration of the Historic Preservation Fund reauthorization. Our Executive Director John Fowler can be reached at jfowler@achp.gov; 202-517-0200.

Sincerely,



Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
Chairman