

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
Chairman

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John M. Fowler  
Executive Director



*Preserving America's Heritage*

August 20, 2018

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-304  
Washington, DC 20510-6150

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Ranking Minority Member  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-304  
Washington, DC 20510-6150

Dear Senators Murkowski and Cantwell:

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) would like to express its support for the Golden Spike 150th Anniversary Act (S. 2831/H.R.5751), which was passed by the House of Representatives on June 25. Established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the ACHP is the independent federal agency charged with advising the President and Congress on matters relating to historic preservation. The voting ACHP members unanimously supported the referenced legislation (with the Departments of the Interior, Defense, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, and Agriculture; and the General Services Administration abstaining).

Next year will mark the 150th anniversary of the creation of the Transcontinental Railroad, a 1,912-mile rail line that would revolutionize American settlement and trade. The ACHP recognizes the significance of the upcoming sesquicentennial and the importance of preserving historic properties associated with its development. The event currently is memorialized and interpreted by the National Park Service (NPS) at the Golden Spike National Historic Site. The proposed bill would enhance this commemoration by re-designating the National Historic Site as a National Historical Park and by creating the Transcontinental Railroad Network (Network). All NPS units and programs that relate to the Transcontinental Railroad would be included in the Network, along with other relevant federal, state, local, and privately owned properties that wish to participate. NPS would provide promotion, interpretation, and technical assistance for the Network.

The parameters of the proposed Network are modeled closely on the U.S. Civil Rights Network, which was created when the African American Civil Rights Network Act became law on January 8, 2018. Creation of such national or multi-state networks of federal and non-federal sites associated with important historic events or themes – with participation and assistance from NPS – could become an important new model for federal support of preservation and interpretation of historic properties. The ACHP supports this concept as offering important opportunities to encourage and leverage preservation of associated historic properties through collaborative partnerships between the federal government and non-federal land owners. The ACHP notes, however, that NPS has raised issues regarding operationalizing the Network using existing resources, and we hope that Congress will continue to coordinate with NPS in this regard.

The House version of the Golden Spike 150th Anniversary Act was amended to include a provision addressing activities of adjacent landowners at “historical crossings” of the historic railroad right-of-way in the park. This issue is an important one since a major component of the Golden Spike National Historic

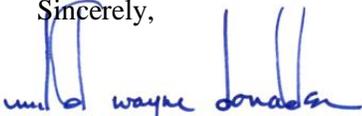
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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Site is 15 miles of linear historic railroad grade surrounded by non-federal land. The House bill would require development of a Programmatic Agreement under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to streamline review of certain actions by adjacent landowners that would have limited impacts on the historic railroad right-of-way. As the federal agency responsible for overseeing the Section 106 review process, the ACHP agrees that streamlining review as proposed is appropriate, but we would like to assist in clarifying the House bill's provision in that regard to help ensure effective consultation and development of the document.

Please feel free to contact us if the ACHP can answer any questions regarding our support for the Golden Spike 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Act or if the ACHP can be of any further assistance. Our Executive Director, John Fowler, may be reached at (202) 517-0200.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Milford Wayne Donaldson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, vertical flourish extending downwards from the end of the name.

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
Chairman