

Hon. Aimee K. Jorjani
Chairman

Leonard A. Forsman
Vice Chairman

John M. Fowler
Executive Director



Preserving America's Heritage

July 26, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Capitol Building, H-232
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Capitol Building, H-204
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Speaker and Mr. Leader:

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) would like to express its support for the Restore Our Parks and Public Lands Act (H.R. 1225)—which has been favorably reported out of committee—and the related bill, the Restore Our Parks Act (S. 500). 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 ACHP members voted at their July 10 business meeting (with federal agency members abstaining) to support this legislation.

The Department of the Interior (DOI) estimates it currently has a backlog of about \$16.4 billion worth of deferred maintenance. The largest portion of that total—\$11.9 billion—reflects needed maintenance of National Park Service (NPS) properties. It has been estimated that approximately 47 percent of the NPS assets needing repair are historic, making deferred maintenance a significant threat to the long-term preservation of NPS's inventory of historic properties. Left unchecked, such deferred maintenance could jeopardize the enjoyment by future generations of irreplaceable historic properties throughout our National Parks.

Creation of a deferred maintenance fund from federal energy development revenues, as proposed by the legislation under consideration, builds upon existing congressional policy precedent. Both the Historic Preservation Fund and the Land and Water Conservation Fund are funded by energy development revenues, and the successful track record of these funds demonstrates the wisdom inherent in using such revenues to help preserve natural and cultural resources. The proposed deferred maintenance fund would provide a critically needed influx of money to address DOI's maintenance backlog. Both the House and Senate versions of the legislation would help preserve NPS historic properties, whether through NPS receipt of 80 percent of the fund as called for in the Restore Our Parks and Public Lands Act or 100 percent of the fund as proposed in the Restore Our Parks Act.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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Please feel free to contact us if the ACHP can answer any questions regarding our support for these bills 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 "Aimee Jorjani". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Aimee Jorjani
Chairman