

Hon. Aimee K. Jorjani
Chairman

Leonard A. Forsman
Vice Chairman

John M. Fowler
Executive Director



Preserving America's Heritage

August 2, 2019

The Honorable Steve Daines
Chairman
Subcommittee on National Parks
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-304
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Angus King
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on National Parks
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-304
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Daines and Senator King:

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) would like to express its support for the Preserving America's Battlefields Act (S. 225). 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 to support this legislation.

The bill would increase funding and extend authorization for the Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant Program, which has been an extremely successful tool for preserving historic places. According to the American Battlefield Trust, this matching grant program has been used to preserve more than 30,000 acres of battlefield land across the country. Originally used only to preserve Civil War battlefields, the program was expanded in 2014 to include Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefields. The proposed funding increase and reauthorization through 2028 would well equip the program to play an important role in helping to preserve and interpret sites as part of the upcoming celebration of America's 250th anniversary in 2026.

The legislation would allow the use of up to 10 percent of the annual appropriation for projects other than land acquisition. This would include up to \$1 million in grants for programs and projects that improve battlefield interpretation and up to \$1 million in grants for the restoration of day-of-battle conditions on land preserved through the program. At the Subcommittee's hearing of June 19, the National Park Service representative testified in support of the bill, but recommended amending it to ensure that day-of-battle restoration projects are performed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's standards for historic preservation. The ACHP supports this proposed amendment.

Please feel free to contact us if the ACHP can answer any questions regarding our support for this bill or if the ACHP can be of any further assistance. Our executive director, John Fowler, may be reached at (202) 517-0200.

Sincerely,

Aimee Jorjani
Chairman

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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