

Hon. Sara C. Bronin
Chair

Jordan E. Tannenbaum
Vice Chairman

Reid J. Nelson
Executive Director



January 25, 2024

American Climate Corps Executive Committee
c/o AmeriCorps
250 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20525

Dear American Climate Corps Executive Committee:

On behalf of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), I am enclosing comments in response to the Administration's request for ideas on the American Climate Corps. 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. America's cultural resources—important places that help to define and connect people to their communities—are experiencing escalating climate impacts that are increasingly leading to their damage and destruction. The American Climate Corps can play an important role in helping to reduce and mitigate such impacts.

First, I would like to suggest that the ACHP serve as a member of the American Climate Corps Interagency Working Group. The ACHP is on the front lines of the “climate heritage” movement and last year adopted a [Policy Statement on Climate Change and Historic Preservation](#), which advises federal agencies and others, including state, Tribal, and local governments, on the importance of taking action to research, plan for, mitigate, and adapt to climate change impacts on historic properties. Among the ACHP's 24 members are 10 federal agencies, eight Presidentially appointed members, and representatives of Tribal, state, and local governments and organizations, each with significant expertise in climate issues, historic preservation, and workforce development. (American Climate Corps Executive Committee members that also are ACHP members include the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture.) In recent years, the ACHP has issued a [Policy Statement on the Promotion and Value of Traditional Trades Training](#), collaborated with the [Campaign for Historic Trades](#), and raised awareness of climate issues—including calling for creation of a federal climate heritage office at a recent congressional roundtable. If invited to join the working group, the ACHP could bring that breadth and expertise to enhance the reach of the American Climate Corps.

Second, I would like to offer our broader support for this effort on an ad hoc basis. The ACHP applauds the inclusion of cultural resources restoration and conservation as part of the comprehensive approach to tackling climate change outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding recently signed by members of the American Climate Corps Executive Committee. The American Climate Corps stands to expand the efforts of many federal service corps members already working to preserve cultural resources. As the program develops, the ACHP would be happy to help advise on how the American Climate Corps can help to protect cultural resources by making surrounding landscapes, forests, wetlands, and coasts as resilient as possible to climate catastrophes. In addition, the American Climate Corps could work directly with cultural resources to assist in their protection and bolster community resilience.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

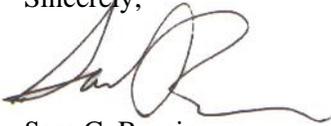
401 F Street NW, Suite 308 • Washington, DC 20001-2637
Phone: 202-517-0200 • Fax: 202-517-6381 • achp@achp.gov • www.achp.gov

For example, the American Climate Corps could help communities in undertaking vulnerability assessments of their historic buildings, particularly in disadvantaged and underserved communities that may lack resources to undertake such surveys. Corps members could assist with weatherization and energy retrofitting of historic buildings. Corps members also could help to monitor climate impacts on resources and assist in recovering information from archaeological sites and recordation of other types of resources in advance of unavoidable loss due to climate change. These are just a few of the ways the American Climate Corps could help federal agencies, states, Indian Tribes, and local communities striving to address climate impacts on historic places.

Fully incorporating protection of cultural resources into the work of the American Climate Corps would be in keeping with the federal government's role and responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act. In accordance with that Act, the federal government is to be a national preservation leader, manage and care for cultural resources under its control, and foster both nonfederal governmental and private preservation activities. Climate change adds new challenges to fulfilling these responsibilities and calls for creative approaches.

Please feel free to contact me if the ACHP can provide assistance during implementation of the initiative, either as a member of the American Climate Corps Interagency Working Group or on an advisory basis. In addition, your staff may wish to follow up with Executive Director Reid Nelson at rnelson@achp.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sara C. Bronin', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Sara C. Bronin
Chair