



Support the Senate Fiscal Year 2026 Interior Appropriations Bill

September 29th, 2025

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the **National Parks Cultural Resource Coalition** and the millions of Americans who value our nation's cultural heritage and public lands, we write to ask for your support of the Senate Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill if it comes to the floor for a vote. The bill reflects the bipartisan compromise that is needed to avoid a continuing resolution and ensure adequate funding for cultural resource preservation and interpretation. We commend the Subcommittee for rejecting the president's budget's most severe cuts and for maintaining critical funding levels that safeguard our national parks, cultural resources, and historic preservation programs. This bill deserves your support.

The Senate bill wisely rejects the House's proposed 32% cut to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), sustaining funding at \$8.6 million. This support is critical, as the ACHP administers *Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act*, the process that requires federal agencies to consider the impacts of their actions on historic and cultural sites and consult with state, tribal, and local partners before proceeding. With America's 250th anniversary fast approaching, ensuring the ACHP can fully carry out this responsibility is essential to protecting the places and stories that tell our nation's history.

We also commend the bill for sustaining funding for key National Park Service (NPS) cultural resource programs, including Cultural Programs (\$39.3 million) and the Heritage Partnership Program for National Heritage Areas (\$31 million). The one-year reauthorization of the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), coupled with level funding for State Historic Preservation Offices (\$62.1 million) and a modest increase for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (\$23.7 million), is an important step forward. However, we are concerned that the bill fails to fund competitive grant programs such as the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization and Semiquincentennial sites—programs that strengthen cultural inclusion and prepare communities for America's 250th anniversary. Restoring these investments will ensure that all Americans see their stories represented and preserved.

NPS is facing a dire staffing shortage and the one percent cut to park operations, though not the long-term funding level that is needed, contrasts with the House's damaging six percent, \$176 million cut to the Operation of the National Park System. Since January, the National Park Service has lost nearly a quarter of its permanent workforce due to the hiring freeze, deferred resignations and retirements, and reassigning agency employees to the Department of the Interior. Rather than deeply cutting the NPS budget, we instead urge Congress to lift the hiring freeze and provide the Park Service with the resources needed to rebuild its workforce and steward both natural and cultural treasures. We commend the bill for providing opportunities for congressional review of any future reorganizations, reductions in force or other policies that would massively undercut NPS' workforce.

Our national parks and cultural sites not only protect America’s diverse history but also sustain vibrant local economies. In 2023 alone, visitors to [national parks spent an estimated \\$26.4 billion](#) in gateway communities, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs. The outdoor recreation economy contributed over \$1.2 trillion in annual economic output. These figures demonstrate the enduring return on investment when Congress supports our parks and heritage.

As we approach the 250th anniversary of American independence, now is the moment to strengthen—not weaken—our collective commitment to historic and cultural preservation.

We ask again that you vote in support of the FY26 Senate Interior appropriations bill. Thank you for considering our views and supporting the stewardship of America’s irreplaceable natural and cultural resources.

Thank you for considering our views,



The National Parks Cultural Resource Coalition is made up of organizations supporting cultural resources and historic preservation, dedicated to ensuring the National Park Service can protect, interpret, and share America’s full history.