



## **Statement in Response to the White House “Saving America’s Story” Report and in Support of the Smithsonian National Museum of American History**

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The National Council on Public History (NCPH) rejects the findings of the “[Saving America’s Story](#)” report on the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. This unserious and distorted document violates the professional ethics and values that have guided history institutions, museums, and cultural organizations for generations. It also fails to reflect the basic and fundamental standards of scholarship, including an accurate interpretation of the full evidentiary record.

Yet its implications are significant. By seeking to shape public history through political interference, the report threatens the independence of the Smithsonian and the public’s trust in museums. It is an outgrowth of [Executive Order 14253](#) (“Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History”), which has repeatedly been used to undermine federal museums and historic sites and the work of dedicated and skilled government historians.

NCPH rejects authoritarian efforts to rewrite and simplify our rich and complex history; we reject the Trump administration’s attempt to control knowledge; we reject efforts to silence the voices of communities of color, immigrants, and LGBTQ+ individuals; we reject the dismissal of intellectual freedom, expertise, and collaboration.

We affirm that history must be grounded in rigorous evidence, professional expertise, open inquiry, and collaboration with communities who hold stories, materials, and memories that expand understanding of our past. While historians debate interpretation, those debates are informed by evidence and peer review; they are not based on political directive. An accurate portrayal of the past requires engaging with the full range of historical experiences and perspectives, not diminishing the experiences and reality of our country’s diverse people. Inclusive history is not partisan history— it is honest history.

We stand with Smithsonian leadership and staff whose work reflects these values every day through exhibitions, collections, research, and public programs that encourage curiosity, critical thinking, and informed dialogue. We thank them for their continued service and support them in this time of unwarranted criticism and politically motivated attacks.

This report is only the latest attempt to silence staff from the Smithsonian, the National Park Service, and other federal and state agencies who preserve and share our history. Such attacks are familiar to anyone who studies history. They come from the playbook of authoritarians who seek to reshape public memory in favor of a simplistic, hierarchical narrative they hope will control our future and limit power to a select few.

We unequivocally reject efforts to use government power to dictate historical interpretation or replace evidence with ideology. Museums best serve the public when they are free to present history that is accurate, inclusive, and shaped by scholarship, evidence, and multiple voices rather than political pressure. In this moment, there is no greater threat to America's story than those who would use their political power to repress it.