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June 2, 2025

Re: Historic Preservation Fund

Dear Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, and Representatives Clarke, Espaillat, Garbarino, Gillen, Goldman, Jeffries, Kennedy, LaLota, Langworthy, Latimer, Lawler, Malliotakis, Mannion, Meeks, Meng, Morelle, Nadler, Ocasio-Cortez, Riley, Ryan, Stefanik, Suozzi, Tenney, Tonko, Torres, and Velazquez,

Historic preservation in New York State, and throughout the nation, is under threat. The Preservation League of New York State, along with the undersigned New York preservation nonprofit organizations, call on Congress to save the programs that support critical preservation projects across our state.

Of urgent concern: **The President's proposed FY 2026 budget guts the [Historic Preservation Fund \(HPF\)](#).**

The budget proposes a \$197 million cut to the HPF, essentially destroying it. This will devastate historic preservation efforts statewide, with immediate and long-lasting consequences. Communities large and small rely on HPF funding to provide affordable housing, promote heritage tourism, celebrate their history, and support economic development.

Without HPF funds, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) may face significant staffing cuts and elimination of grants to local municipalities. The agency will be hindered as it carries out duties mandated under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Those include survey and inventory of historic resources, preparing National Register nominations, review and compliance under Section 106, and administration of the Historic Tax Credit program.

Millions of dollars' worth of public and private investment in New York's infrastructure, affordable housing, and other redevelopment projects will be jeopardized.

► **We call on Congress to demonstrate continued, bipartisan commitment to our nation's history, ahead of the 2026 Semiquincentennial – by proposing FY26 appropriations necessary for SHPOs to carry out the requirements of the NHPA, emphasizing their role as stewards of our nation's history; and by investing in preservation projects that recognize the past, with an eye toward the future.**

In addition to the threat to FY 2026 HPF funds, **already-appropriated FY 2025 HPF funds have not been released.**

Congress appropriated FY 2025 HPF funds in March 2025, but they have not been released to State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs and THPOs). The Federal appropriation to NY SHPO is around \$1.7 million, the third-highest operational grant in the nation. **With those funds, the NY SHPO leads the nation in multiple categories:**

consultation reviews (11,000+ annually), historic tax credits (\$7.17 billion in total rehabilitation investment 2018-2024), and National Register of Historic Places listings (nearly 130,000).

► **We call on Congress to facilitate the immediate approval of the FY2025 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) so that NY SHPO and NY's eight THPOs can continue to aid in the preservation of our state's heritage.**

Further jeopardizing our ability to carry out preservation programs in New York State are significant staffing cuts imposed on the National Park Service.

The NY SHPO works with numerous federal agency counterparts. NPS layoffs and retirements continue at a rapid pace with a second Reduction in Force (RIF) expected in early June 2025, following the conclusion of a forced retirement cycle by May 31, 2025. New York will experience a significant slowdown or potential halt of infrastructure and historic tax credit rehabilitation project reviews once projects are passed to NPS for final review – discouraging private investment and hampering community and economic growth.

► **We call for the reinstatement of NPS staff.**

As New Yorkers living and working in rural, suburban, and urban communities throughout the state, we call on the federal government to fulfill its obligations under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 so that New York State's rich cultural heritage may continue to sustain our future.

Sincerely,

Adirondack Architectural Heritage, Erin Tobin Executive Director
Docomomo US, Liz Waytkus, Executive Director
Docomomo US New York/Tri-State, John Arbuckle, President
Friends of Historic Kingston, Dean Engle, Assistant Director
FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, Nuha Ansari, Executive Director
Historic Albany Foundation, Pamela Howard, Executive Director
Historic Districts Council, Frampton Tolbert, Executive Director
Historic Ithaca, Zachary Lifton, Executive Director
Historic Saranac Lake, Amy Catania, Executive Director
Landmark Society of Western New York, Wayne Goodman, Executive Director
Landmark West!, Sean Khorsandi, Executive Director
New York Landmarks Conservancy, Peg Breen, President
NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project, Ken Lustbader, Project Director
Otsego 2000, Ellen Pope, Executive Director
Preservation Association of Central New York, Nicole Fragnito, Executive Director
Preservation Buffalo Niagara, Bernice Radle, Executive Director
Preservation League of New York State, Jay DiLorenzo, President
Preservation Long Island, Jackie Powers, Executive Director
Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation, Samantha Bosshart, Executive Director
Save Harlem Now!, Claudette Brady, Executive Director
Schenectady Heritage Foundation, Gloria Kishton, Chair
TAP Inc., Barb Belson, AIA, Executive Director
Thousand Island Park Landmark Society, Trude Fitelson, President
Village Preservation, Andrew Berman, Executive Director



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