

# Legislative Update

for State Historic Preservation Officers



## PRESERVATION LEGISLATION

### **.R. 1043/S.584**

Community Restoration and Revitalization Act  
For a list of co-sponsors, go to:

<http://>

[www.preservationaction.org/08lobbying/tax2008.htm](http://www.preservationaction.org/08lobbying/tax2008.htm)

### **HPF APPROPRIATIONS**

The President signed the FY2008 omnibus spending bill on December 26. SHPOs received \$39,376,000. The President proposes \$35,717,000 in FY2009

To access legislative information including bill text, summary, and status, go to THOMAS at: <http://thomas.loc.gov>

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

#### **CAUCUS**

For a list of members, go to: [www.preservationaction.org/caucus/caucus07.htm](http://www.preservationaction.org/caucus/caucus07.htm)

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### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION CAUCUS**

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### 1) PRESERVE AMERICA SAVE AMERICA'S TREASURES ACT MARKED UP IN SENATE COMMITTEE, S. 2262

In a May 7th mark up, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee reported 45 public land bills, including the Preserve America Save America's Treasures Act (S.2262). The Act would authorize the Preserve America and Save America's Treasures programs. These were considered by the Senate in an April 24 subcommittee hearing. The Committee focused its discussion on designation of the Snake River (primarily in Idaho) as a National Wilderness Area and related water rights issues, and a bill that would withdraw drilling within a 100-mile tract of exceptional Wyoming wilderness. The mark up went on longer than planned, and most of the many bills were not discussed before the committee members steadily left the room for other commitments.

The meeting adjourned before Senator Bob Corker (R-TN) added that S.2262 should have a five-year sunset clause. Senate Energy Committee staff noted that considering the timing of Corker's official comments on the bill, his recommendation would have to be added on the floor as an amendment to be included in the bill.

Most of the many bills reported were rolled into a very large bill passed the next day. (See S. 2739 below) This bill included authorization for a number of National Heritage Areas and related studies. The package, "The Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008" did not include the Preserve America and Save America's Treasures authorization.

Energy committee staff explained that bills included within the larger package (S. 2739) had to meet specific criteria. The individual bills had to have been passed in the House and their Senate companion bill had to have been reported out of its committee. S.2262 did not meet either of those criteria. The committee is putting together another package for consideration by the full Senate but has not yet developed criteria for including bills. Staff notes that S.2262 is a good candidate for further action because it has strong bipartisan support.

Prior to the May 7th mark up, the Senate legislation was amended by removing the words "marketing purposes" from the criteria for Preserve America grants. Given that Preserve America's heritage tourism component inherently relates to marketing historic resources, this change will have no real impact.

### 2) BEST GUESS FOR INTERIOR FY 09 APPROPRIATIONS TIMING

Interior spending leadership would like to mark up their appropriations bill – including historic preservation programs – before the Memorial Day recess. A few factors are working against this goal. For one, another spending priority is now taking precedence. Discussions are now focused on the details of a supplemental spending bill to support the Iraq war and defense programs. Arguments about domestic spending within the supplemental bill have stalled that bill's passing. Efforts resolve concerns take time away from other spending bill work. In addition, before spending bills can be created within each of the appropriations subcommittees, a budget resolution has to be passed to establish basic levels that will be divvied up among programs within each bill. Neither the supplemental bill nor the budget resolution was on the floor this week.

According to House Interior appropriations staff, historic preservation activities continue to be a priority. Though spending levels for programs will be determined by the amount of money the subcommittee has to work with – established by the budget resolution – "people's work is recognized." Way to go people!

### 23) NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS LEGISLATION PASSES IN OMNIBUS BILL, S. 2739

After years of extraordinary effort by grassroots advocates, and passionate support from members of Congress, a number of National Heritage Areas bills were passed by the Senate *and* signed into law on May 8th. New National Heritage Areas include:

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area (PA, MD, WV, VA)

The Niagra Falls National Heritage Area (NY)

Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area (IL)

Technical corrections and additions were made to several existing heritage areas.

### 4) THE LATEST ON THE COMMUNITY RESTORATION AND REVITALIZATION ACT

While advocates for the Community Restoration and Revitalization Act (H.R.1043/S.584) hope that provisions with the Act will be included within the latest affordable housing tax package, we are also looking ahead for other opportunities this session.

On April 9, the House Ways and Means Committee marked up affordable housing legislation we hoped would include a number of provisions from H.R.1043. Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH), the bill's majority sponsor, advanced the legislation for consideration within this discussion. A portion of one of the bill's provisions related to encouraging tax-exempt use in Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit projects was folded into the bill. An informal conference, or reconciliation of differences and chamber requests) should take place in the short term.

If the conference does not include more of the Act's provisions all is not lost. With "economic stimulus" still in the forefront of Congressional discussion, elements of the Act may become part of bills this session. While we know these stimulus packages will be considered "soon," we do not know exactly how soon. This being the case, advocates should maintain positive momentum behind the bill that just this week topped 108 (including the lead sponsor, Tubbs Jones). Representative Rodney Alexander (R-LA) added his official support on May 6.

### 5) MEMORIAL DAY AND DISTRICT WORK PERIOD MAY 24 – JUNE 1

Congress will adjourn and return to their home states and districts for the Memorial Day recess. This is also the Memorial Day District Work Period and an excellent time for grassroots advocates to connect with Congress in their district offices. Given the anticipated timing of the Interior appropriations bill and ongoing opportunities for the Community Restoration and Revitalization Act, these meetings are especially critical now.

For more on district lobbying this recess, note Preservation Action's special edition of their weekly legislative update. This includes links to updated one-pagers, tips for in-district lobbying, and other help.

The latest Congressional Report Card:

<http://www.preservationaction.org/states/5.1.2008report%20card.htm>

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### IMPORTANT DATES:

Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, March 1-5, 2008

Board of Directors Meeting, Wisconsin, July 2008

General Membership Meeting at NTHP Conference, Tulsa, October 2008

Board of Directors Meeting, Arkansas, November 2008

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*The National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers is the professional association of State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) who carry out the national historic preservation program as delegates of the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Membership in the NCSHPO is limited to states and territories.*

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*The NCSHPO Weekly Legislative Update is available only to members of the NCSHPO. An update archive is located in the Members Only section of the NCSHPO website. You will need a user name and password to access this section; email [Harbeson@sso.org](mailto:Harbeson@sso.org) for this information.*