

Legislative Update

for State Historic Preservation Officers

May 16, 2008

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PRESERVATION LEGISLATION

H.R. 1043/S.584

Community Restoration
and Revitalization Act

For a list of co-sponsors, go to:
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

1. PRESIDENTIAL PRESERVE AMERICA AWARDS CEREMONY AT WHITE HOUSE
2. FARM BILL NEARS PASSING
3. DISTRICT WORK PERIOD REMINDER

1) PRESIDENTIAL PRESERVE AMERICA AWARDS CEREMONY AT WHITE HOUSE

On May 12, the Administration hosted its Presidential Preserve America Awards at a White House ceremony. "This year's honorees each represent a significant period in our nation's history. Their preservation efforts ensure Americans gain a greater knowledge of our nation's past while impacting the economic vitality of their communities, states and the nation," said John L. Nau, III, chairman of the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), which administers the award program on behalf of the White House.

Recipients included: the African Burial Ground Project, New York, New York; Corinth and Alcorn County Mississippi Heritage Tourism Initiative; Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York, New York; and Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program. Larry Oaks, Texas State Historic Preservation Officer, along with Terry Colley, Deputy Texas SHPO accepted the latter award. Other SHPOs in attendance at the event: Arizona SHPO Jim Garrison and New Mexico SHPO Kak Slick.

The Preserve America Presidential Awards are given annually to organizations, businesses, and government entities for:

- exemplary accomplishments in the sustainable use and preservation of cultural or natural heritage assets;
- demonstrated commitment to the protection and interpretation of America's cultural or natural heritage assets; and
- integration of these assets into contemporary community life, combining innovative, creative, and responsible approaches to showcasing historic local resources.

The awards are one element of the Preserve America program. Other elements include: a Teacher of the Year award; a Preserve America community designation program; Executive Order 13287 that directs that the federal government to be good stewards of its historic properties and work between agencies to support preservation ethics; as well as the Preserve America Grant program to fund heritage tourism, planning and educational projects.

The projects were selected through a national competition administered by the ACHP in cooperation with the Executive Office of the President, and in partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior.

For more on the award recipients and the Preserve America program, visit:

<http://www.preserveamerica.gov>

2) FARM BILL NEARS PASSING

The long-awaited Farm Bill, now called the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (H.R.2419), is getting very close to passing. On May 14, the House of Representatives passed the bill's "conference report" by a clear margin, with 318 in favor and 106 against. This report, which includes language mutually agreeable to both chambers, was agreed to and announced publicly on May 8. The Senate agreed to the report on May 15, with 81 in favor and 15 against. The final vote count and bi-partisan support puts the bill over the two thirds majority needed to override a possible Presidential veto.

The following report language includes preservation-oriented programs:

The Farmland Protection and Grasslands Reserve Program. This program keeps productive farmland in privately-owned agricultural use by assisting states, tribes, and local government or non-profit entities with the purchase of conservation easements. The program also supports the purchase of development rights on productive farmland, and on farms containing significant historical or archaeological resources.

The Historic Barn Preservation Program. This program would authorize funding for historic barn preservation. The conference report proposes to add historic barn surveys to the program language.

Rural Collaborative Investment Program -- Rural Heritage Program. This would provide rural communities with grants to maximize the value of rural heritage. The program also creates a nationwide framework to support this kind of activity (among other rural investment strategies).

The bill also extends authorization of special rule that encourages **private contributions of conservation easements** until December 31, 2009.

3) DISTRICT WORK PERIOD REMINDER

Congressional recesses present a great time for SHPO educational outreach to federal legislators. The next district work period is May 24 - June 1. Other district work periods this session:

June 28 - July 7

August 9 - September 7

For more on putting together your in-district meetings:

<http://www.preservationaction.org/states/5.9.2008special.htm>

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

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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