

## Weekly Legislative Update for State Historic Preservation Offices

### **House Passes Preserve America/Save America's Treasures Legislation**

On Tuesday, the full House of Representatives approved legislation authorizing the Preserve America and Save America's Treasures preservation grant programs (H.R.3981) by a vote of 360-23.

The House version differs slightly from its Senate counterpart (S. 2262). The House bill was amended after it was officially reported in the Natural Resources Committee this spring. House amendments include a sunset provision – the bill authorizes \$25 million annually over the period of FY2009 through FY2013 for the Preserve America program and \$50 million annually for the Save America's Treasures program without a sunset year. Additionally, the House report, which provides direction for the legislation, includes language praising SHPOs for their role in historic preservation and clarifies that SAT and PA funding is to be supplemental to the activities carried out by SHPOs and THPOs.

The Senate bill is now a part of an enormous omnibus resources bill that combines a number of legislative ideas not yet considered by the House. Because the House has not seen many of the ideas within the Senate's omnibus bill, it is not expected to move quickly at this point. Support for S. 2262 is strong, however. It is expected to pass, within its omnibus, before Congress is scheduled to adjourn on September 26.

The legislation has moved relatively rapidly through the process from legislative concept to near-law. Last year, on October 30<sup>th</sup>, H.R.3981 and S.2262 were introduced with fanfare at the historic Sewall-Belmont House, headquarters of the National Women's Party and a voting rights museum. The House version, introduced by Historic Preservation Caucus co-chair Brad Miller (D-NC) has significant support – 57 cosponsors. The Senate version, introduced by Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM) has 7 cosponsors including Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) who spearheaded the creation of the Save America's Treasures program while First Lady.

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