

Weekly Legislative Update for State Historic Preservation Officers
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1. Additional Funding Requested for Flood-Damaged Midwest States

This week on the Hill, preservationists presented an official supplemental funding request for State Historic Preservation Offices in flood-damaged Midwest states. The National Conference of State Historic Preservation Offices has led the effort to solicit \$35 million in Historic Preservation Fund grants to Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin and Minnesota. The dollar amount requested is based on preliminary reports from affected states. The NCSHPO also requested \$3 million for associated costs, including additional Section 106 reviews.

The request was sent to Iowa Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Charles Grassley (R-IA), as well as Interior Appropriations Committees and the House Historic Preservation Caucus.

Funds would be available until September 30, 2011.

Estimates for preservation-related response activity are speculative. Preservationists and Congressional leadership are looking to the example set in 2005 in the Gulf Coast. Considered to be one of the United States' worst natural disasters, the Senate requested \$83,000,000 for additional funding to State Historic Preservation Offices. The eventual amount, \$43,000,000, has since been supplemented, but provides a baseline for considering disaster-related historic preservation funding.

2. FY 2009 Appropriations Process On Hold

Definitive information about how much Congress will recommend for preservation spending in FY2009 is unlikely until after the August recess. While the full Senate Appropriations Committee is scheduled to mark-up their version of the Interior bill on the 24th, debates about the future of offshore oil leases and a focus on passing the FY2009 Defense spending bill are taking up time and delaying appropriations committee work on all other spending bills.

The August recess, originally scheduled to start on August 8 for the Senate, may be moved up to August 2 or 3. The move would require weekend sessions between now and then. The House is scheduled to adjourn on August 1.

The last two weeks will, therefore, be chocked with Congressional action followed by five weeks of an In District Work Session and two presidential nominating conventions.