

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 7, 2024

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C. St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland,

Thank you for your continuous efforts to provide critical resources and funding to Tribal Nations. We greatly appreciate the Department of the Interior's direct support for Tribal Nations across each agency and look forward to seeing the continued commitment outlined in the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

As the Department is developing the Fiscal Year 2025 budget request, we would appreciate the Department's consideration of requesting \$34 million for Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs). These dedicated Tribal Nation officials play an essential role in protecting and preserving cultural resources and sacred places on Tribal Nations' lands and their ancestral lands.

THPOs are funded through the National Park Service's (NPS) Historic Preservation Fund (HPF). Historically, THPOs have received modest increases in funding that neither keep pace with the number of consultations they are required to do under the National Historic Preservation Act nor with the annual increase in the number of THPOs. To establish a THPO, Tribal Nations are required to apply to the NPS, and each year, five to ten Tribal Nations establish new THPOs.


Although THPOs received a significant increase in Fiscal Year 2023, unfortunately, it does not offset the many years of modest increases. Before the \$7 million increase in Fiscal Year 2023, the average THPO received around \$75,000 in HPF funding. The 2023 increase raised that average number to just over \$100,000. However, THPOs are expected to respond to thousands of requests for consultation on the impact that infrastructure and energy projects would have on their Nations' cultural resources and sacred places.

We must ensure that Tribal Nations have adequate resources and funding to properly complete their critical work for Tribal Nations. The \$34 million number for THPOs in Fiscal Year 2023 would both allow existing THPOs to receive a meaningful increase and account for the nine new THPOs that were established in 2023.

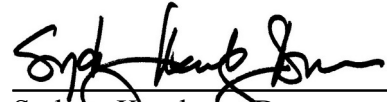
Thank you again for your continued work on behalf of Indian Country and consideration of this request. We look forward to reviewing the Fiscal Year 2025 budget and finding continued

opportunities to ensure THPOs have the tools to protect Tribal Nations' cultural resources and sacred places.

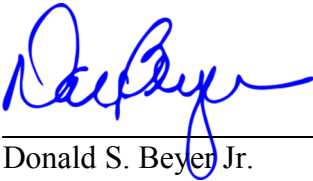
Sincerely,



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress




Sydney Kamlager Dove
Member of Congress



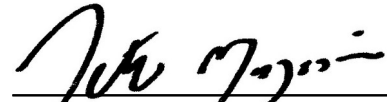
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



Seth Magazine
Member of Congress

Cc: Director Shalanda Young, Office of Management and Budget