

**Society of American Archivists
Council Conference Call
February 11, 2019
1:00 – 2:00 pm EST**

Consent Agenda: Ratify Executive Committee Interim Actions
(Prepared by Executive Committee Member Erin Lawrimore)

BACKGROUND

Current parliamentary policy agrees on validating board decisions made remotely, and ratifying the Council's online and conference-call decisions via the Consent Agenda does not conflict with any existing SAA policy.

DISCUSSION

Given the Executive Committee's use of an e-mail discussion list to function as a group and make decisions remotely, approving interim Executive Committee actions via the Consent Agenda contributes to streamlining the group's work and improves access to the interim decisions of SAA's elected decision makers.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the following interim actions taken by the Executive Committee between December 3, 2018, and January 21, 2019, be ratified:

- Approved a letter to the editor of *The Washington Post*, drafted by the SAA Committee on Public Policy (COPP), in response to the article, "Ivanka Trump used a personal email account to send hundreds of emails about government business last year," and reissued a statement on "[Use of Non-government Email Accounts for the Conduct of Public Business](#)." (Appendix) (December 3, 2018)
- Approved a statement, drafted by COPP, "[Government Shutdown Compromises Work of Federal Archivists](#)." (January 21, 2019)

Letter to the Editor of *The Washington Post* (11.28.18)

To the Editor:

The November 20 article by Carol Leonnig and Josh Dawsey on Ivanka Trump's misuse of personal email to conduct public business underscores the critical need for both stronger records management laws and the resources needed to ensure compliance with these laws. Reports indicate that Trump's personal attorney led the review of her emails to determine which were public and which were private. That work should have been done by a trained, non-partisan expert in federal records laws and records management policies.

Whether willful or unintentional, practices such as these undermine the principles of an open government, hinder the public's ability to hold officials accountable, and endanger the comprehensiveness of our nation's historical record. They also compromise the work of government records managers and archivists who work on behalf of the American people to document the business of our government. Stronger records laws that fully empower the National Archives and Records Administration to enforce records policies—and that include penalties for any official who breaks them—will ensure that our government meets its responsibility to preserve the evidence of its activities. The Society of American Archivists urges concerned citizens and Congress to focus attention on this important issue and work to strengthen the requirements for government officials and agencies to effectively document and manage the conduct of business.

Article: https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/ivanka-trump-used-a-personal-email-account-to-send-hundreds-of-emails-about-government-business-last-year/2018/11/19/6515d1e0-e7a1-11e8-a939-9469f1166f9d_story.html?utm_term=.2ed124b554f4