

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
February 11 and 12, 2025
Chicago, IL
Virtual Meeting**

**Consent Agenda: Ratify Council Interim Actions
(Prepared by Astoria Edwards, Assistant Director of Foundation)**

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 Council's use of an e-mail discussion list to function as a group and make decisions remotely, approving interim Council 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 November 11, 2024 – January 30, 2025, be ratified:

- That the SAA Council approve joining NHA with its strong record of legislative advocacy that aligns with the interests of SAA and its archivists (01/30/25 - Appendix A)
- The SAA Council appointed Audra Eagle Yun, Ricky Punzalan and Christina Zamon to serve on the Committee on the Selection of SAA Fellows (12/20/24)

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Hybrid**

**Recommendation to Approve joining the National Humanities
Alliance consortium for SAA's advocacy efforts.**

(Prepared by: Bryan Whitlege and Jacqueline Price Osafo, former SAA
representatives to NCH)

BACKGROUND

Legislative advocacy is a key focus in the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Strategic Plan, particularly Goal 1.2: "Educate and influence decision makers in any setting about the importance of archives and archivists." There are numerous federal programs support archives and archivists, including the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and National Park Service (NPS). Advocacy with policymakers is essential for securing budgets and advancing the agendas of these agencies.

DISCUSSION

SAA's legislative advocacy efforts faced a challenge with the dissolution of the National Coalition for History (NCH), which previously served as a key advocacy consortium. Given the limited size of the archival profession, effective advocacy requires collaboration with a larger network of organizations. Without a strong advocacy framework, archives risk being sidelined in federal policy discussions, and other groups may prioritize their own interests over those of archives.

The National Humanities Alliance (NHA) presents a promising opportunity for SAA to engage in legislative advocacy. NHA is forming interest groups for its members, including one focused on archives and cultural heritage. Benefits of joining NHA include:

- Dedicated communication channels among interest group members.
- Quarterly facilitated meetings.
- Legislative and policy tracking.
- Advocacy alerts to mobilize members.
- Advice and contacts for direct advocacy with legislative offices.

RECOMMENDATION

That the SAA Council approve joining NHA with its strong record of legislative advocacy that aligns with the interests of SAA and its archivists:

Support Statement:

- NHA has ensured robust funding for NEH grant programs benefiting archives.
- NHA has prioritized NARA funding since 2018, contributing to a 20% budget increase for NARA between 2020 and 2023.
- NHA supported SAA's Archives on the Hill advocacy efforts by providing resources, training, and direct participation.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: Approval of joining NHA for advocacy efforts would provide an advocacy coalition that would represent SAA's goals and interests. An alternative to joining NHA is to forgo formal advocacy efforts and rely on allied constituencies, such as genealogists, historians, and librarians, to advocate for archives indirectly. However, these groups may prioritize their own interests, such as increased access to NARA reading rooms or library-specific grants, which may not align with archivists' broader goals.

Fiscal Impact: SAA's membership dues to NHA, based on 2022 IRS Form 990, would be \$6,573. Joining NHA would provide a collaborative framework to replicate the benefits previously offered by NCH.