



July 19, 2013

Senator Tom Udall, Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services and
General Government
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate, SD-133
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Udall:

The Society of American Archivists urges you to support level funding (at \$4.75 million) for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in FY 2014.

Why is this small federal agency so important? NHPRC's competitive grants have a distinguished record of supporting innovation at the state and local level that has a major impact on federal records. These grants, which support new jobs at institutions throughout the country, have made substantial contributions to preserving and providing access to our nation's documentary heritage in the following areas:

- ***Improving the accessibility of the historical record:*** As one example, NHPRC research fellowship and archival processing funds supported the development of a method to reduce significantly the un-cataloged backlogs of collections in historical repositories around the country, thus helping them make important primary sources more quickly and easily available to students, scholars, and researchers.
- ***Addressing the growing challenge of electronic records:*** NHPRC funding has supported work that has been essential in creating scalable solutions that can be applied in towns, counties, states, and organizations across the U.S. Without such work, the nation faces historical amnesia as its documentary heritage exists increasingly in transitory and highly perishable electronic formats.
- ***Making community connections to national history:*** On a competitive basis, NHPRC provides re-grants to states that make it possible for smaller, grassroots organizations scattered throughout the country to receive grants of even a few hundred dollars that can make a significant difference. These organizations, including historical societies, local public libraries, ethnic organizations, and local governments, are key to preserving the diversity of the record that makes up the American experience. These

re-grants also ensure that it is not just the history of the great cities, but also of small communities in every corner of the country, that is preserved for future generations.

NHPRC grants leverage state, local, institutional, foundation, and other private funding by requiring 50% cost sharing – i.e., for every federal dollar invested, another dollar is spent.

NHPRC is the *only* federal program that focuses on records programs and projects. It is the *only* federal program that links federal archives with those held by states, counties, municipalities, universities, and nongovernmental organizations. And thus it is the *only* federal program that specifically supports Americans' right and need to know both their heritage and the workings of their public offices.

The 6,200 members of the Society of American Archivists urge the members of the Senate Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee to support (at least!) level funding of \$4.75 million for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission for FY 2014. The preservation and accessibility of our American documentary heritage depends on it!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Dooley", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jackie M. Dooley
President, 2012 – 2013