



The Honorable Mike Simpson
U.S. House of Representatives
2084 Rayburn H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
U.S. Senate
531 Hart S.O.B.
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
U.S. House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn H.O.B.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
U.S. Senate
522 Hart S.O.B.
Washington, DC 20510

March 8, 2023

Dear Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, Chairman Simpson, and Ranking Member Pingree:

The American Institute of Architects
1735 New York Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20006

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F (202) 626 7547

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) represents over 96,000 architects and design professionals. For over 130 years, we have been committed to safeguarding the public's health, safety, and welfare, and to the improvement of our nation's quality of life through design. Central to that mission has been AIA member commitment (as stewards of historic built design resources) to identifying, understanding and preserving existing buildings. AIA respectfully submits the following recommendations for appropriations in the FY 2024 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies for your consideration.

For the first time in two decades, the majority of American architecture firm billings come from renovation work in existing buildings, not new construction ([ABI August 2022: Billings continue to grow at architecture firms - AIA](#)). Buildings currently account for 39 percent of carbon emissions. Renovating those buildings dramatically reduces embodied carbon, which is the carbon emitted during new construction by the manufacture, transport, and assembly of materials.

Rather than vacating or avoiding the use of outdated structures, architects believe that older buildings should be valued as climate assets that we cannot afford to squander. AIA and the preservation community have long considered building conservation an essential tool to realize quick and sharp carbon emissions reductions. AIA's former AIA President Carl Elefante, FAIA (2018) underscored this when he coined the phrase "the greenest building is... one that is already built."

AIA regards historic preservation as an effective vehicle for advancing equity and making justice a deliberate aim of the building process, both unmistakable pillars of AIA's Strategic Plan ([2021-2025-Strategic-plan.pdf \(aia.org\)](#)) and the AIA [Guides for Equitable Practice - AIA](#). With earnest and enduring federal support, communities across the nation may continue to benefit from increased community resilience and adaptive capacity by protecting cultural heritage in the historic built environment.

As the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies considers investments for FY 2024, AIA urges you to include the following investments for the built environment:

National Park Service (NPS):

\$225 million for Historic Preservation Fund

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

\$75 million for the Energy STAR Program

Bureau of Land Management (BLM):

\$25 million for Cultural Resources Management

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP):

\$10 million for the overall operations of the ACHP

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH):

\$230 million for the overall operations of the NEH

Commission on Fine Arts:

\$4 million for the overall operations of the Commission

AIA looks forward to continuing to work with you to examine new methods to improve efficiency and to ensure the adaptive reuse of the existing built environment.

Sincerely,



Sarah Dodge

Senior Vice-President of Advocacy & Relationships

cc: The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Speaker
The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, Minority Leader
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Leader
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader