

Congressman Michael R. Turner
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Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests & Public Lands
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Thank you Chairman Grijalva and Ranking Republican Member Bishop for holding this important hearing today on HR 3981, the Preserve America and Save America's Treasures Authorization Act.

I want to thank Congressman Brad Miller, my co-chair on the Historic Preservation Caucus, who authored this legislation with me. I am glad that we have been able to collaborate with all the historic preservation groups in writing this bi-partisan bill.

Finally, I would like to recognize the representatives who are testifying today from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Council of State Historic Preservation Officers, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. These historic preservation experts have all been tireless advocates for this legislation, and also for all issues related to historic preservation.

Mr. Chairman, HR 3981 is a codification of two important historic preservation programs that are currently authorized by executive order.

The Save America's Treasures (SAT) program, authorized during the Clinton Administration, provides bricks and mortar funding to grantees to protect and restore historic community assets.

The Preserve America Program, authorized by President Bush, capitalizes on the SAT program by providing funds to designated communities for heritage tourism and education.

Together, these two programs work hand-in-hand to provide needed resources to local communities across America. These resources help to protect, restore, and promote historic assets.

Both the Save America's Treasures and the Preserve America programs have had an enormous impact on historic preservation nationally, as well as in Ohio.

Ohio is home to nine Preserve America Communities, including my community of Dayton, Ohio. In fact, Dayton recently received a Preserve America Grant that will help analyze heritage tourism in the area.

Additionally, between 1999 and 2006, Ohio has been the home of 45 Save America's Treasures Projects.

These projects total approximately 11 million dollars in funding toward bricks and mortar restoration of important Ohio historic assets such as:

- The Paul Lawrence Dunbar House in Dayton
- Cincinnati's Union Terminal
- The Wright Flyer III in Dayton
- The Palace Theatre in Columbus
- And last, but certainly not least, The National First Ladies Library in Canton, Ohio.

Both the Save America's Treasures program and the Preserve America program require a one-to-one funding match. As a result, these two programs have leveraged millions of dollars in additional private sector investment for our nation's historic assets.

HR 3981 ensures that public/private partnerships remain a key aspect to the preservation of important historic assets by maintaining the current requirement that non-federal funds are to be used in collaboration with these federal grants.

Additionally, enacting this legislation will ensure that a stable and continuous funding source is authorized to assist in funding these important projects.

Last October, Congressman Miller and I, along with First Lady Laura Bush, and Senators Clinton and Domenici held an event at the Sewall-Belmont House, a 1999 SAT grantee, across from the Capitol Building. The event was to kick off the introduction of this legislation. At that event, the historic preservation community came together along with congressional leaders, to show how vital these programs are to our communities.

Earlier this month, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on S.2262, an identical companion bill to HR 3981. That bill was introduced by that full committee's Ranking Republican Senator, Pete Domenici, and co-sponsored by a bipartisan group of Senators including that Committee's chairman, Senator Bingaman.

It is my hope today's hearing along with recent Senate action will continue the momentum that will be needed in order to move this important legislation through both Houses of Congress.

The authorization of these programs will help highlight the importance of historic preservation as an economic development tool as well as a core national value.

It is clear that saving architectural treasures and neighborhoods is not just a way to pay homage to our past, it's also a way to boost the economy of our present and future.

I thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and welcome your questions.

