

**Summary of the Confirmation Hearing for Aimee Jorjani,
Nominee for Chair of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP)**

Background:

Aimee Kathryn Jorjani is the first person nominated to be a full-time, Senate-confirmed Chair of the ACHP, an independent federal agency created in 1966 by passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. Until passage of the National Park Service Centennial Act in 2016, the Chair was a part-time position. Although they were selected by the President, previous Chairs were not subject to Senate confirmation because they worked on a part-time basis.

The ACHP has 23 members total, including: the Secretary of the Interior, heads of other federal agencies, the Architect of the Capitol, a state governor, a mayor, experts on historic preservation, a member of a tribe or Native Hawaiian organization, members of the public, the president of the National Council of State Historic Preservation Officers and the Chair of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Summary:

In Senator Murkowski's (R-AK) opening remarks, she highlighted how the ACHP can be an advocate for historic preservation and a watchdog, ensuring that the NHPA is not used to delay projects and investments. The Senator briefly outlined why this is the first time a nominee for Chair has been considered and how the position was created as part of the National Park Service Centennial Act.

Senator Murkowski said that Ms. Jorjani is well-qualified for the job, given both her educational and professional credentials. Ms. Jorjani has a master's degree in historic preservation and worked for six years as Special Assistant for Historic Preservation at the Department of the Interior during the Bush Administration. She was also a staffer in the office of Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI).

Ms. Jorjani highlighted her experience working with the Preserve America grants and her work as Interior's first historic preservation officer. She mentioned wanting to utilize early planning to avoid delays and digitization of cultural resources data. Ms. Jorjani emphasized her desire to use inter-agency collaboration to further ACHP's mission.

Senator Cantwell (D-WA) asked what Ms. Jorjani's goals are. She responded that the Preserve America program is close to her heart. She also highlighted the Save America's Treasures program.

Senator Cantwell thanked Ms. Jorjani for mentioning digitization and said that she'd like to see Ms. Jorjani aggressively take on the issue.

Senator Portman (R-OH) raised the issue of Twilight Towers. He said that rural broadband is a big priority of his. He asked Ms. Jorjani if she believes that a solution to the issue is needed to clarify how the issue should be handled. Senator Capito followed up and asked if Ms. Jorjani would work with stakeholders to formulate best practices on Twilight Towers.

Senator Capito (R-WV) asked what kind of relationship Ms. Jorjani would build with SHPOs. Ms. Jorjani replied that she looked forward to engaging with them.

Senator Portman asked her to take seriously her role on the Federal Permitting Council and commit to attending the meetings.

Senator Heinrich (D-NM) asked Ms. Jorjani to elaborate on her experience with the tribal consultation process. He said that recent efforts in other agencies to redefine the relationship as racial rather than government to government had concerned him. Ms. Jorjani affirmed that she considered it to be a government to government relationship. Senator Heinrich also asked about her familiarity with the Chaco Canyon controversy.

Senator Murkowski raised the issue of complaints that NEPA and NHPA were misused to delay or halt development projects. She asked how we can move forward and address these type of concerns. Ms. Jorjani said that she heard stories about Section 106 causing such delays. She suggested that early review and improved training would be helpful. Senator Murkowski asked if NHPA sufficiently addresses security concerns and cited the case of listing the surf break near Camp Pendleton on the National Register.

Senator Hirono (D-HI) asked Ms. Jorjani to commit to prioritizing the unique perspectives of native peoples. The Senator also highlighted recent flooding in HI and asked if Ms. Jorjani would support extensions on the required comment period following a natural disaster. Ms. Jorjani affirmed that she would pay attention to the issue. The Senator asked if Ms. Jorjani could cite a time when she stood up on behalf of the public interest. Senator Hirono asked if Ms. Jorjani would stand her ground if confronted with such a situation with this Administration. Ms. Jorjani said that she would.

Additional Information:

A [recording of the hearing](#) is available on the Committee's web site.