

July 12, 2018

The Honorable Tom Udall
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
303 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Udall and Heinrich,

As organizations dedicated to preserving cultural and historic resources, we write today in support of the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act (S. 2907).

We appreciate that your legislation provides a permanent withdrawal for approximately 316,000 acres of federal lands surrounding Chaco Canyon in recognition of the extensive and interconnected cultural resources across the landscape. We also applaud your work with the All Pueblo Council of Governors and the Navajo Nation to develop this legislation.

Chaco Canyon and the surrounding landscape hold remarkable examples of ceremonial buildings, distinctive great houses, and an elaborate network of engineered roads that link Chaco Canyon with outlying sites. This landscape was designated a World Heritage Site in 1987 for preserving outstanding elements of Chacoan culture, which dominated the region from the mid-9th to early 13th centuries.

Energy development associated with the Mancos-Gallup Shale formation in northwest New Mexico has increasingly threatened cultural resources and the broader landscape affiliated with Chaco. Recognizing this threat, the National Trust for Historic Preservation listed the Greater Chaco Landscape among America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in 2011. In September 2017, Archaeology Southwest released a new report summarizing recent research by the archaeological and academic communities on the Greater Chaco Landscape that underscores the critical need to enhance protections for the area.

Thank you for introducing the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act and for your continued leadership in protecting this important cultural landscape.

Sincerely,

National Trust for Historic Preservation
American Alliance of Museums
American Anthropological Association
American Cultural Resources Association
The Archaeological Conservancy
Archaeological Institute of America
Archaeological Society of New Mexico
Archaeology Southwest

Arizona Archaeological and Historical Society (AAHS)
Arizona Preservation Foundation
Association for Washington Archaeology
Association of Iowa Archaeologists
Cienega Watershed Partnership (CWP)
Coalition for American Heritage
Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists (CCPA)
Colorado Plateau Archaeological Alliance
Conservation Lands Foundation
Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology
Council for West Virginia Archaeology
Council of Texas Archeologists
Crow Canyon Archaeological Center
Florida Archaeological Council
Florida Public Archaeology Network
Friends of Cedar Mesa
Heritage Ohio, Inc.
Illinois Archaeological Survey (IAS)
National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHPO)
New Mexico Archeological Council (NMAC)
Pennsylvania Archaeological Council
Providence Preservation Society
Rainbow Heritage Network
Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO)
Site Steward Foundation, Inc.
Society for American Archaeology
Society for California Archaeology
Society for Historical Archaeology
SRI Foundation
Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation
US/ICOMOS (The United States National Committee of the International Council on
Monuments and Sites)
Washington Trust for Historic Preservation
The Wilderness Society
Wisconsin Archaeological Survey
World Monuments Fund
Wyoming Association of Professional Archaeologists
Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area