

June 4, 2019

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

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

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján  
2323 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Debra Haaland  
1237 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Xochitl Torres Small  
430 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Udall and Heinrich, and Representatives Luján, Haaland, and Torres Small:

As organizations dedicated to preserving cultural and historic resources, we write today in support of the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act (S. 1079/H.R. 2181).

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-9<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> 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

Archaeological Institute of America  
Archaeological Society of New Mexico  
Archaeology Southwest  
Arizona Preservation Foundation  
Association of Iowa Archaeologists  
Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley  
Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians  
Cienega Watershed Partnership  
Coalition for American Heritage  
Conservation Lands Foundation  
Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology  
Council of Texas Archeologists  
Crow Canyon Archaeological Center  
Desert Archaeology, Inc.  
Friends of Cedar Mesa  
Friends of Ironwood Forest  
Heritage Ohio, Inc.  
Illinois Archaeological Survey  
Montana Preservation Alliance  
National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers  
National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers  
National Parks Conservation Association  
New Mexico Archaeological Council  
New Mexico Wild  
Newark Earthworks Center  
Pala Band of Mission Indians  
Preservation Action  
Rainbow Heritage Network  
Save Our Heritage Organisation  
Sedona Heritage Museum  
Society for American Archaeology  
Society for California Archaeology  
Society for Historical Archaeology  
SRI Foundation  
Suquamish Tribe  
The Amerind Foundation, Inc.  
The Archaeological Conservancy  
The Wilderness Society  
US/ICOMOS  
Vail Preservation Society  
Washington Trust for Historic Preservation  
Wisconsin Archaeological Survey  
World Monuments Fund