



Friends,

We take great joy in announcing the **success** of our shared efforts to secure passage of the African American Burial Grounds Preservation Act! We lobbied Congress together through meetings, emails, phone calls, and site visits that highlighted the need for federal action to safeguard historic African American cemeteries. Today, we celebrate all that we accomplished.

A bipartisan group of lawmakers secured the inclusion of the bill in the omnibus appropriations package. Five years in the making, the effort in Congress was led by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT), Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC), Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), and the late Rep. Donald McEachin (D-VA).

The African American Burial Grounds Preservation Program will help identify burial grounds ahead of infrastructure projects and commercial development, thereby minimizing construction delays and avoiding unnecessary community heartache. These sacred sites, and the stories they tell, are an integral part of our American heritage. This legislation will assist descendants and communities identify, interpret, and preserve historic cemeteries. Details of the legislation begin on page 2,954 of the fiscal year [2023 omnibus appropriations bill](#).

We are so thankful to all of you -- more than [150 groups](#) who joined with the Coalition for American Heritage, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the National Parks Conservation Association to advocate for making preservation of historic African-American cemeteries a federal priority.

This success belongs to all those who shared their stories with our leaders in Congress. The examples and the testimony you provided convinced Congressional leaders that action was necessary.

More work remains; the National Park Service will need input from communities across the nation on how to implement this important new program. There will again be a need for you to share your experiences in order to better inform the development of the African American Burial Grounds Preservation Program. We will stay in touch with you to help ensure that everybody hears about these opportunities to participate. In the meantime, please accept our congratulations on all that you achieved.

Many thanks for partnering with us.