

**SOCIETY OF
ARCHITECTURAL
HISTORIANS**

22 June 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

Re: Support of the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act (S. 2907).

Dear Senators Udall and Heinrich,

The Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) expresses strong support for the proposed 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 other extraordinarily significant archaeological sites, as well as an elaborate network of engineered roads that link Chaco Canyon with prehistoric and historic occupations across the desert Southwest. This landscape was designated a World Heritage Site in 1987 for preserving outstanding elements of Chacoan culture, which dominated the region from the early thirteenth to the mid-nineteenth 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 Canyon. 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 and its irreplaceable archaeological and cultural resources.

SAH joins the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and other national and regional organizations, in support of the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act (S. 2907).

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

Sincerely,



Bryan Clark Green, Ph.D., LEED AP BD+C
Chair, Society of Architectural Historians Heritage Conservation Committee

cc: Ms. Stephanie Meeks, National Trust for Historic Preservation; Ms. Pauline Saliga; Ms. Deborah Slaton; Mr. Kenneth Breisch, Ph.D.; Mr. David Fixler, FAIA; Mr. Jeffrey Cody, Ph.D.; Mr. Ken Oshima, Ph.D., Mr. Anthony Cohn, Mr. Sandy Isenstadt, Members, SAH Heritage Conservation Committee.