



February 24, 2022

The Honorable Alma Adams
2436 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable A. Donald McEachin
314 Cannon Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
271 Cannon Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Adams, McEachin, and Fitzpatrick:

The American Cultural Resources Association (ACRA) and the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) commend you for introducing H.R. 6805, the African American Burial Grounds Preservation Act.

ACRA is the national trade association supporting the common interests of cultural resource management (CRM) firms of all sizes, types, and specialties. ACRA member firms undertake much of the legally mandated cultural resource studies and investigations in the United States and employ thousands of professionals, including archaeologists, architectural historians, historians, ethnographers, and an increasingly diverse group of other specialists in the museum and non-profit sectors.

The SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With nearly 7,000 members, SAA represents professional and avocational archaeologists, archaeology students in colleges and universities, and archaeologists working at Tribal agencies, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members throughout the U.S., as well as in many nations around the world.

African American burial grounds are a vital part of our nation's story. They are the resting places of former enslaved people, freedmen, civil rights champions, military veterans, community and national leaders, artists and artisans, and beloved family members. From the early days of our Republic to the Jim Crow era, African American families were often barred from burying their loved ones in White cemeteries. Large numbers of African American burial sites lack any official record of their existence, including even their location, and many have been neglected and abused over time, effectively erasing the memory of countless Americans whose history deserves to be told. In many areas of the country, burial grounds are the only tangible properties that represent African American culture and heritage.

By providing grant opportunities and technical assistance via the National Park Service to research, identify, survey and preserve these cemeteries, your legislation will help ensure we honor the legacy of countless Americans whose stories are an integral part of our nation's history.

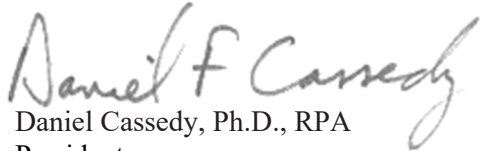
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We commend you for your leadership on this important issue and urge your colleagues to pass this legislation this year.

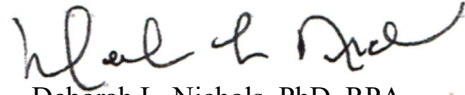
Sincerely,



Daniel Cassidy, Ph.D., RPA

President

American Cultural Resources Association



Deborah L. Nichols, PhD, RPA

President

Society for American Archaeology

cc: Members of the U.S. House