

**NATIONAL
TRUST
FOR
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION®**

Richard Moe
PRESIDENT

July 14, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
235 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Nancy:

The National Trust for Historic Preservation strongly supports H.R. 6305 that would make needed changes to the Presidio Trust Act ensuring the integrity of the Presidio Historic Landmark District for years to come. In addition, changing the name of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area to the Golden Gate National Parks is a very fitting way to highlight the fact that one of the nation's premier urban parks is under the protection of the National Park Service Act. We think the bill would be further improved with changes recommended by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), as noted below. We are grateful for your leadership on safeguarding this national treasure for future generations.

The Presidio Trust Act in its current form contains a reversionary clause that H.R. 6305 would eliminate. Under current law, if the Presidio Trust achieves full financial self-sufficiency by 2013, the National Historic Landmark would be eligible for "disposal" by the General Services Administration under the Defense Authorization Act of 1990. This would cause the Presidio to be "deleted" from the National Park system.

H.R. 6305 would rightly eliminate this reversionary clause and with it the threat that these national assets could be sold off to the highest bidder. It would also recognize that the Presidio Trust is on track to accomplish its financial objectives by 2013.

The removal of the reversionary provision would place the Presidio Trust in a better position to exercise utmost care in its stewardship of the Presidio National Historic Landmark District. The National Trust is confident that the thoughtful rehabilitation of the District's contributing historic structures is financially sustainable, ecologically friendly, and wholly in the best interests of park-goers and the American taxpayers.

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
July 14, 2008
Page Two

The National Trust also applauds eliminating the requirement that building 102 be maintained solely for use as a visitor center. This would help spur the creation of a truly welcoming reception area to interpret the remarkable historical qualities of the Presidio. We also hope that it would lead to the renovation of the three contiguous Montgomery Street Barracks buildings. This new opportunity would be a greater lure for adaptive reuse projects and reduce the pressure to construct any new buildings on the Main Parade Ground.

Additionally, we appreciate your effort to create a Fort Scott Advisory Task Force. Fort Scott has been overlooked too often, given the spectacular prominence of the Golden Gate Bridge nearby. We hope that the creation of this body will result in enhanced opportunities for public involvement, creative new opportunities to preserve the Fort's contributing structures, and further public engagement.

NPCA Recommendations:

We welcome the proposal for a greater role for the Presidio Trust in providing interpretive services for the Presidio. We believe, however, that the bill should be clear that any interpretation will remain subject to Park Service standards. The Trust would like to see the following changes to the bill to make it even more effective in making the Presidio Historic Landmark District the best it can be:

1. Amend Section 3(b) by inserting: "The services and programs so provided by the Presidio Trust shall comply with those standards and policies of the National Park Service applicable to such services and programs in the National Park System."
2. Amend Section 3(b) by adding: "The Secretary will submit to Congress a mutual interpretation plan agreed to by the parties by October 1, 2009 and each five years thereafter." This would provide a means for Congress and the Secretary to monitor compliance and progress.
3. Amend HR 6305, Section 3(c2B): by adding: ", taking into account compliance with the Presidio Trust Act: Section 101 Findings" This would clarify the intent that "high quality public programming" is consistent with the Section 101 Findings, which preserve the qualities of a National Park.


The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
July 14, 2008
Page Three

Lastly, thank you for your continued efforts to ensure the protection of the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. The National Trust supports the Park's mission and was a strong advocate for the restoration of the 1895 C.A. Thayer schooner, one of the last surviving sailing schooners designed for the turn-of-the-century West Coast lumber trade. H.R. 6305 would ensure that proceeds from the leasing of the historic Haslett Warehouse will be used directly to fund the maintenance and administration of the vessel and other park assets. This will go a long way toward ensuring the survival of this unique park.

Many thanks for all that you are doing to help preserve our nation's heritage.

Warmest regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Moe", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Richard Moe

RM: brt/av

Cc: Chris Powell, National Park Service, Pacific West Region