



## COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEMOCRATS

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Ranking Member Nick J. Rahall, II

### **Updating the Historic Preservation Act July 2005**

**H.R. 3446, introduced by Representative Rahall on July 26, amends the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to authorize deposits into the Historic Preservation Fund through 2011 and permanently authorize funding for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. In effect, the legislation extends authority for the money and expertise necessary for the Historic Preservation Act to continue working.**

**The National Historic Preservation Act is the centerpiece of federal efforts to preserve America's cultural and historic resources. One way the Act achieves this important goal is through the work of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.**

**The Council has two important roles under the Act. One is to assist the Secretary of the Interior in cataloguing and preserving known historic resources through the National Register of Historic Places and other programs. In addition, the Council assists all federal agencies in avoiding damaging or destroying historic resources through consultation under the Act. The Council is not empowered to control agency decision-making or federal property.**

**Last reauthorized for five years in 2000, the Council is made up of Agency heads and Presidential appointees with diverse backgrounds. H.R. 3446 recognizes the critical importance of the Council by providing it permanent authorization while also making several technical changes in the Council's make-up and operation.**

**In addition, the bill will authorize deposits into the Historic Preservation Fund for the next six years. The Fund is administered by the National Park Service and provides matching grants to states and territories for a variety of historic preservation programs including statewide historic preservation surveys and preservation plans. The Fund also provides matching grants to Indian Tribes, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians and Historically Black Colleges and Universities for cultural heritage projects and the preservation of historic structures.**

**The source for the Historic Preservation Fund is a small percentage of the enormous revenues generated by oil and gas development in the Outer Continental Shelf. This legislation would allow that funding to continue flowing into the Fund through 2011.**

**H.R. 3446 is nearly identical to a companion bill in the Senate as well as legislation introduced in the previous Congress which received the support of the Advisory Council, the National Park Service, and the Historic Preservation Community.**