

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 16, 2026

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Westerman and Ranking Member Huffman,

Thank you for your leadership on this committee and for the opportunity to bring this legislation to your attention. We write to you in support of the Quindaro Townsite National Historic Landmark Act (H.R. 8276). This bipartisan legislation from Representatives Derek Schmidt (KS-2), Emanuel Cleaver (MO-05), and Sharice Davids (KS-3) would designate the Quindaro Townsite in Kansas City, Kansas, as a National Historic Landmark.

Founded in 1857, Quindaro emerged as a beacon for Free-State advocates during the turbulent “Bleeding Kansas” era. Strategically located along the Missouri River, it served as a critical entry point for anti-slavery settlers and a sanctuary for those escaping bondage through the Underground Railroad. The town’s establishment was a collaborative effort among the Wyandot Nation, New England abolitionists, and African American settlers, exemplifying a unique and harmonious multicultural alliance during a period marked by division and conflict.

Beyond its pivotal role in the anti-slavery movement, Quindaro became a nucleus for post-Civil War African American advancement. The establishment of the Quindaro Freedman’s School, later known as Western University, marked a significant milestone as the first Black school west of the Mississippi River. Institutions like Douglass Hospital further underscored the town’s commitment to education and healthcare within the African American community.

Quindaro's history has long merited formal recognition. National Historic Landmarks are designated either through the National Park Service System Advisory Board or by an official act of Congress. In May of 2025, the National Historic Landmarks Committee unanimously recommended Quindaro Townsite for this designation, however the administrative process has since stalled. This bill would allow Congress to fulfill this recommendation and recognize the important contributions of this historic location.

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We are grateful for the committee and their interest in our legislation. It is our hope that our colleagues will join us in recognizing the rich history of Quindaro by supporting H.R.8276.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Emanuel Cleaver, II".

Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sharice L. Davids".

Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress