

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 13, 2025

The Honorable Russell Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Director Vought,

We write to you regarding critical funding for our nation's 62 National Heritage Areas (NHAs) for fiscal year (FY) 2025. On March 15, 2025, President Trump signed into law the *Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025*, which included annual appropriations for NHAs through the National Park Service (NPS) at \$29.232 million. Since this bill was signed into law almost three months ago, NHAs – including the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area (FFNHA), which encompasses much of eastern Kansas and western Missouri – have received no indication from the NPS as to when their FY25 allocations will be processed (around \$500,000 per NHA); it is our understanding that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has yet to provide guidance to the NPS on finalizing these awards.

NHAs are an excellent example of public-private partnerships that preserve our nation's history, showcase our cultural heritage, and boost local economies. With modest federal appropriations, NHAs secure a minimum 100-percent match in nonfederal dollars to provide irreplaceable educational and tourism opportunities. FFNHA tells important stories of American settlement of the western frontier, Bleeding Kansas and the Civil War, *Brown v. Board of Education* and significant figures in our nation's history such as President Harry Truman, Amelia Earhart, and the Native tribes of the Great Plains.

NHAs contribute billions to the U.S. economy annually and support hundreds of thousands of jobs, leveraging each dollar of federal funding into more than \$5 of nonfederal resources. For example, FFNHA provided 61 percent of its FY24 income from nonfederal sources. Our nation's 62 NHAs provide an excellent and sustainable model of economic development at little cost to the federal government.

This delay in funding is causing significant strain on our NHAs – many of which rely on small staffs and robust volunteer networks; annual NPS appropriations are critical to attracting private donations, planning grants and historic preservation efforts, and executing educational opportunities.

We respectfully request that you quickly provide us with a timeline as to when FY25 appropriations for NHAs will be processed and work to execute these funding awards as soon as possible. Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please contact Eric Dunay (eric.dunay@mail.house.gov) in the office of Representative Sharice Davids or Fabiola Pagan (Fabiola.pagan@mail.house.gov) in the office of Representative Emanuel Cleaver, II.

Sincerely,



Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

Cc: Jessica Bowron, Acting Director, National Park Service