

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 14, 2026

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and  
Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

Dear Chair Murkowski and Ranking Member Merkley:

As you consider Interior, Environment, and Related Agency appropriations for fiscal year (FY) 2027, we respectfully request that the bill include language that prohibits the use of funds to implement or enforce Department of the Interior Secretarial Order 3431, “Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History.”

Secretarial Order 3431 requires all federal land management agencies, including the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service, to review “all public monuments, memorials, statues, markers, or similar properties” and remove content deemed to “inappropriately disparage Americans past or living.” The order has led to the arbitrary flagging of thousands of interpretive signage and educational materials across public lands and historic sites, and resulted in the alteration, and in some cases removal of historic exhibits across the National Park System and other Interior-managed sites.

The National Park Service (NPS) and its sister agencies are entrusted with preserving our natural and cultural heritage, including preserving notable sites that tell the full and complex story of our country – the moments of injustice alongside moments of achievement. Yet under this administration’s promotion of revisionist history, interpretive materials addressing slavery, forced removal of Indigenous peoples, LGBTQ and women’s rights, and climate change have come under scrutiny. From Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia to Muir Woods in California, we are seeing unprecedented political whitewashing of our nation’s history. This administration is bypassing consultation with Tribal Nations and descendant communities and ignoring professional standards around historical interpretation.

At the same time, this administration has undermined the integrity of our national park system and weakened the agency tasked with protecting our history. Cuts to NPS funding and staff have strained park maintenance and severely impacted the agency’s history preservation programs. Secretarial Order 3431 compounds the damage by imposing burdensome and partisan reviews on an already beleaguered workforce. The Secretary’s intimidation tactics have injected additional

confusion and burden on NPS staff and threaten to negate decades of NPS work to represent a broader swath of American history.

These efforts are inconsistent with the National Park Service's Organic Act and the National Park Service Centennial Act, which require NPS to conserve historic objects unimpaired for future generations and ensure that interpretive materials reflect current scientific and academic research, content, methods, and audience analysis. If the Department of the Interior succeeds in altering or erasing these stories, the public's ability to fully understand and learn from our complex history may be compromised. True patriotism requires honest engagement with both our moments of achievement and those of moral failure. Our national parks function as living laboratories and public classrooms. Sanitizing history undermines efforts to ensure that all Americans can see themselves reflected in these shared places.

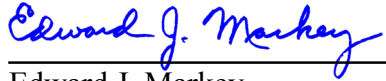
The effects of this directive extend far beyond the national park system. Federal pressure to "restore truth and sanity" to American history has already begun to chill historic preservation efforts nationwide, as states, localities, and cultural institutions fear censorship and retribution from the administration.

We urge the Committee to include the following language requests to ensure historic preservation honestly represents American history.

- Bill language: Language in the FY 2027 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill to prohibit the use of funds to implement, administer, or enforce Secretarial Order 3431. Such a limitation would help protect our nation's history and heritage and ensure that our national park sites remain grounded in professional scholarship and community input.
- Report language: We also urge the Committee to include report language that prohibits the use of funds to alter, remove, conceal, or replace public-facing interpretive material at any unit of the National Park System unless done with documented professional review by qualified public matter experts and public, written justifications regarding the proposed action and its legal basis.
- Report language: And finally, we ask the Committee to consider the inclusion of report language requiring the National Park Service to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations identifying any interpretive materials removed, revised, relocated, covered, or withdrawn in 2025.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. The trust of the American public, as well as our national understanding of our own history, depends upon our ability to prevent the censorship of our National Park System materials.

Sincerely,



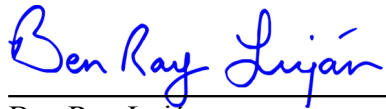
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United States Senator



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United States Senator



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Ben Ray Lujan  
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Richard Blumenthal  
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Chris Van Hollen  
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Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



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Angela D. Alsobrooks  
United States Senator



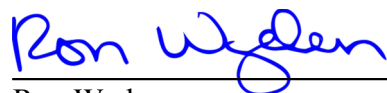
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