



NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

ARCHIVIST *of the*
UNITED STATES

DAVID S. FERRIERO

T 202.357.5900

F 202.357.5901

david.ferriero@nara.gov

July 13, 2017

Dr. Alan Kraut, President
Mr. Lee White, Executive Director
National Coalition for History
400 A Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Dr. Kraut and Mr. White:

Thank you for your letter of July 12, 2017 raising concerns about upcoming changes in the hours of the research rooms at Archives I and Archives II initially announced on July 5, 2017. We very much appreciate the support of the National Coalition for History and we regret that in this instance we were unable to provide more advance notice or to involve you in our decision.

The changes are necessary as we have been challenged to consistently provide sufficient staff to safely serve records in the research rooms on Saturdays and Mondays. Shifting our staff to a Monday to Friday schedule will address the coverage issue with our existing resources. The challenges we face became even more acute with the recent announcement of thefts from our holdings by a historian and we had to expedite the notification of staff, contractors, and researchers once it became clear a change was critical.

Our staffing challenges also mean that a delay in implementation as you propose is not possible without continuing to place our holdings at risk. Similarly, being open on a limited number of Saturdays as you propose is not a viable option as the challenges we face staffing our research rooms on Saturdays would still exist and would likely be compounded.

We do not currently provide either pulls of records or consultation services on Saturdays. As such, researchers seeking to use our records on a Saturday have been required to first visit the research rooms Monday to Friday. We have received complaints from researchers about the lack of services on Saturdays as well as requests for expanded hours Monday to Friday. We do not have the resources to do both and given the challenges maintaining consistent staffing on Saturdays, we have chosen to focus our resources on the days where we serve the greatest number of researchers.

We announced on July 11, 2017 that we are expanding our research room hours at Archives I and Archives II by an hour each day Monday to Friday effective July 24, 2017. By increasing the hours we are open Monday to Friday and adding an additional pull time we will be able to better serve our largest number of researchers. We recognize that these changes will be welcomed by some researchers and that they will represent a significant challenge to others.

As you are aware, all Federal departments and agencies are in the midst of assessing their operations as part of a government-wide reform effort. These efforts will bring additional changes and we are committed to meeting the objectives of the reform effort and continuing our transformation of our operations to meet the changing ways records are created and used by government and researchers alike.

We appreciate the work of the National Coalition for History and your support of our mission. Please direct any questions to William J. Bosanko, Chief Operating Officer, who can be reached via 301-837-3604 and william.bosanko@nara.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. S. Ferriero", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

DAVID S. FERRIERO
Archivist of the United States