

SUPPORT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (NARA)

ACTION NEEDED

We urge Congress to provide no less than \$433 million in FY 2022 funding for the operating expenses of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). This reflects a 15 percent increase for an agency where funding has stagnated over the last decade while its responsibilities have increased. We also urge the inclusion of at least \$13 million for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the grant-making arm of the agency, to rebuild capacity lost in the last decade. *The National Archives is funded under the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill.*

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Increased federal spending for the National Archives is necessary to manage, preserve, and make accessible the federal government's records. NARA's budget has either decreased or been stagnant in recent years even as its responsibilities have grown.

The NHPRC's budget has seen small increases in recent years, but its capacity has not recovered from major reductions after FY 2011.

NARA and NHPRC Annual Appropriations, FY 2010 to Present (in millions of dollars)

	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
NARA	339	339	373	353	370	365	372	380.6	384.6	373	359	377*
NHPRC	13	10	5	4.75	4.5	5	5	5	6	6	6.5	6.5

*The FY 21 amount reflects an \$18 million increase, though that increase is earmarked for costs associated with the presidential transition and is a customary boost that the Archives receives in transition years.

ABOUT NARA AND NHPRC

Congress established the National Archives in 1934 to preserve and make accessible to the public the records of the U.S. Government. American citizens rely on access to immigration, naturalization, and census records held by the National Archives to provide proof of citizenship and conduct genealogical research. Veterans and their families rely on military records preserved by NARA to gain access to their benefits. NARA coordinates all federal records issues, including declassification of federal records and compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, the Federal Records Act, and the Presidential Records Act. It also holds the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, and Bill of Rights. To meet the increasing demands of citizen access and preserve the growing collection of federal records, NARA now has over 40 facilities nationwide, including 32 regional archives and records centers and 14 presidential libraries.

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) promotes the preservation and use of the American documentary record. It supports publication projects of national significance, such as the Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution, the papers of George Washington, the Frederick Douglass Papers, and the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers. NHPRC grants are essential to support preservation and increased access to historical records. These grants leverage state, local, institutional, foundation, and other private funding by requiring 50 percent cost sharing.

NARA'S FUNDING HAS STAGNATED WHILE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE INCREASED

- The federal government's transition to electronic records, including email, has dramatically increased the number and complexity of records NARA needs to manage, process, and catalog.
- Each new presidential library created and placed under NARA's care adds new staff, maintenance, and records management costs.
- NARA's responsibilities in facilitating declassification and FOIA compliance have increased at a time of diminishing resources, creating large backlogs.
- Forced to do more with less funding, NARA has had to reduce hours at its research rooms and limit the number of materials individuals can access at one time, expanding the time required to conduct research.