



April 28, 2023

The Honorable Jeffrey Zients
Chief of Staff to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Zients,

We want to thank you for your leadership in the ongoing effort to review and reform Executive Order (E.O.) 13526. Signed by President Barack Obama in 2009, this E.O., which stipulates policies that govern the declassification and the management of federal national security information, is long out of date and inadequate for meeting today's challenge of protecting national security while at the same time serving the needs of an educated citizenry. As has been widely recognized, overclassification had become endemic in the United States, and the E.O. contributes to the problem.

The National Coalition for History (NCH) is a consortium of 43 organizations that advocates and educates on federal legislative and regulatory issues affecting historians, archivists, researchers, educators, students, documentary editors, preservationists, genealogists, political scientists, museum professionals and others. Many of our members rely heavily on the declassification of federal records in their work.

To inform and assist your efforts, the NCH submits for consideration by those charged with reviewing and reforming the E.O. the attached statement and set of recommendations prepared by one of our member organizations, the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR). NCH has endorsed the statement and is confident that it will provide valuable input into your deliberations.

We thank you in advance for considering these recommendations and offer our assistance as you craft these much-needed reforms of the executive order.

Sincerely,

Lee White
Executive Director
National Coalition for History