



Society for Industrial Archeology

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SAVE AMERICA'S INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE – DON'T DESTROY IT!

American industry is vital to our national identity. It drove the United States' rise from a newly established country to the largest economy in the world. As our country prepares to celebrate the 250th anniversary of its founding next year, the Society for Industrial Archeology is concerned that we are jeopardizing the very parks, museums, and sites that tell the story of American industry and help us to understand our nation's strength.

The industrial heritage community is new compared to other heritage communities, but since its rise in the 1970s and 80s, it has accomplished a lot. Resulting from the work of organizations like ours, and with the support of the Federal agencies and bureaus that back such work, Americans today can interact with and learn from our industrial past.

Our historic industrial sites and museums include the mines, mills, factories, utility and transportation facilities, and collections of documents, objects, and machinery that built our nation. Many are properties of the National Park Service, while others fall under the care of state and local agencies and thousands of nonprofit organizations. They operate on a varied mix of volunteers and staff whose work depends on funding through Federal channels, in addition to state, local and private support.

The significant reductions we are seeing in funding and staff to federal departments and programs will cut this work short. Sites will close, we will lose irreplaceable buildings, infrastructure, and collections, and Americans will lose their access to the iconic sites that represent our country's rise to greatness. If we are to understand what makes our country great, we must sustain our ability to preserve and present historically significant industrial sites that tell the stories of American industrial might.

We are particularly concerned with cuts to these agencies and bureaus:

- National Park Service (including the Historic American Engineering Record and the more than 20 park units that preserve industrial heritage),
- Historic Preservation Fund (including funding for State Historic Preservation Officers),
- Institute for Museum and Library Services (including the Save America's Treasures program),
- Smithsonian Institution (including its affiliate the National Museum of Industrial History),
- National Endowment for the Humanities (which provides the majority of funding for state-level humanities programming),
- National Endowment for the Arts (including the Save America's Treasures program),
- Library of Congress,
- National Science Foundation.

The President and Congress have an opportunity to benefit and protect the historic treasures that embody our nation's proud ascendancy. We call on them to not only restore, but to increase staff and funding to these vital agencies and bureaus. They are vital to preserving the proud legacy of America's industrial history and heritage.