



**National Trust for  
Historic Preservation**

*Save the past. Enrich the future.*

April 7, 2016

Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to request that you exercise your authority under the Antiquities Act to establish a Stonewall National Monument to recognize the events that transpired around the Stonewall Riots in New York City.

The Stonewall Inn, one of the most recognized sites of significance to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) history in the country, is considered the birthplace of the modern LGBT civil rights movement. On June 28, 1969, patrons of a small bar in New York City's West Village first fought back against what had become regular harassment and city-sanctioned arrests by police against LGBT people. It was there that the LGBT community rejected the status quo and stood up against the laws that prevented them from simply being themselves. As the fight spilled into the surrounding streets, what ensued was a series of spontaneous demonstrations now considered to be a catalyzing moment for the LGBT rights movement. The Stonewall Riots continue to be commemorated in communities across the United States and the world.

Two-thirds of America's more than 400 National Park sites are dedicated to cultural and historical significance. These are places where people lived, ideas were born, and history was made. Stonewall played a pivotal role in our nation's continuing struggle for equal rights for all Americans, and it deserves protection as the first National Monument dedicated to LGBT history.

There is a National Park unit in Seneca Falls that tells the story of the women's rights movement. There is a National Historic Trail from Selma to Montgomery that tells the story of the African-American rights movement. Still others interpret Hispanic labor struggles, the internment of Japanese-Americans, and the displacement of Native Americans. It is time to have a National Monument that tells the story of the LGBT rights movement.

**Stephanie K. Meeks** | PRESIDENT

The Watergate Office Building 2600 Virginia Avenue NW Suite 1000 Washington, DC 20037  
E [smeeks@savingplaces.org](mailto:smeeks@savingplaces.org) P 202.588.6105 F 202.588.6082 [www.PreservationNation.org](http://www.PreservationNation.org)

The National Trust is deeply committed to ensuring the protection of historic sites that tell the stories of all Americans. We have been proud to support your use of the Antiquities Act to protect nationally significant and culturally diverse stories and sites at such places as the Fort Monroe, Pullman, Chimney Rock, Harriet Tubman and Cesar E. Chavez National Monuments.

We look forward to continuing our collaboration with your Administration to expand and enhance the protection of our national treasures by including the Stonewall story in the collection of places cared for and interpreted by the National Park Service. We thank you for your leadership on this issue.

With warmest regards,



Stephanie K. Meeks

Cc: Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewel  
Director of National Park Service, Jonathan Jarvis