



**National Trust for  
Historic Preservation**

*Save the past. Enrich the future.*

April 1, 2019

Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, Public Lands  
Chairman Deb Haaland  
1329 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, Public Lands  
Ranking Member Don Young  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Haaland and Ranking Member Young,

We appreciate the opportunity to share our support for H.R. 434, the Emancipation National Historic Trail Act. The National Trust enthusiastically endorses this legislation and looks forward to its enactment in this Congress.

**Interests of the National Trust for Historic Preservation**

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a privately-funded charitable, educational, and nonprofit organization chartered by Congress in 1949 to “facilitate public participation in historic preservation” and to further the purposes of federal historic preservation laws. The intent of Congress was for the National Trust “to mobilize and coordinate public interest, participation, and resources in the preservation and interpretation of sites and buildings.” With headquarters in Washington, D.C., nine field offices, 27 historic sites, more than one million members and supporters, and a national network of partners in states, territories, and the District of Columbia, the National Trust works to save America’s historic places and advocates for historic preservation as a fundamental value in programs and policies at all levels of government.

**H.R. 434, Emancipation National Historic Trail Act**

We appreciate Representative Sheila Jackson Lee’s leadership on this legislation to establish the Emancipation National Historic Trail in the state of Texas. The route would extend approximately 51 miles from the Osterman Building and Reedy Chapel in Galveston along Texas State Highway 3 and Interstate Highway 45 North to Freedmen’s Town and Emancipation Park located in Houston.

The designation of this historic trail—to be administered by the National Park Service—traces the 19<sup>th</sup> century migration route from Galveston to Houston of newly freed slaves and persons of African descent. On June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger arrived at Galveston to announce the freedom of the last American slaves, which belatedly freed approximately 250,000 slaves nearly two and a half years after Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. Their migration to the community of Freedmen’s Town located in the Fourth Ward of Houston would be codified in this proposed historic trail designation and further allow the National Park Service to tell the stories of all Americans.

National Historic Trails administered by the National Park Service provide an opportunity to recognize, commemorate, and interpret travel routes of national historic significance while sharing the significant histories of our nation. We urge Congressional support of this legislation and look forward to enactment of H.R. 434.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pam Bowman".

Pam Bowman  
Director of Public Lands Policy