



September 11, 2026

House Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Federal Lands
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: H.R. 9148, Scipio Jones House Assessment Act

Dear Subcommittee Chairman Tiffany, Vice Chairman Kennedy, and Subcommittee Members:

I hope this finds you well. On behalf of Preserve Arkansas, the statewide nonprofit advocate for historic preservation, I am writing to offer support for H.R. 9148, the Scipio Jones House Assessment Act.

Located at 1872 South Cross Street in Little Rock's Dunbar School Neighborhood, the Scipio Jones House is significant for its association with Jones, a prominent African American attorney, and for its Craftsman-style architecture. Scipio Africanus Jones was born in 1863 in Dallas County, Arkansas, and later moved to Little Rock, where he attended Walden Seminary (now Philander Smith College) and Bethel Institute (now Shorter College). He received a bachelor's degree in 1885 and taught public school while studying law. Jones passed the bar in 1889 and began practicing law at Little Rock. He was most well-known for his defense of the Elaine Twelve, who had been sentenced to death after the Elaine Massacre of 1919. The appeal went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ordered the cases be retried, leading to the release of all twelve men from prison. Jones was also a leader in the Republican Party of Arkansas and worked to ensure that African Americans had a voice within the Party.

His home on Cross Street was built about 1928 for Jones and his second wife, Lillie Jackson Jones. Its Craftsman-style design incorporated brick, stucco, granite, and tile with a clipped second-story gable and exposed rafter tails. Jones lived here until his death in 1943. The house has been vacant since about 2010 and is in desperate need of repair.

In 2019, the Scipio Africanus Jones House was included on Preserve Arkansas's Most Endangered Places List, which raises awareness of significant historic properties facing myriad threats. H.R. 9148 would assist in the effort to preserve this important historic building by evaluating it for national significance and putting it in context with the broader struggle for African American Civil Rights in the United States. This elevated level of significance would make the property eligible for additional grant funding to aid in its restoration and site interpretation.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of H.R. 9148.

Sincerely,

Rachel Patton, Executive Director
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