

Members of the Committee,

It's an honor to be here today. I'm Will Glasco, CEO of Preservation Virginia, the nation's oldest statewide historic preservation nonprofit. First, I'd like to thank Congressman Wittman for inviting us to participate in this panel, and for his steadfast support of our preservation efforts, especially at our site located at Jamestown.

Founded in 1889, we help save historic sites around the Commonwealth of Virginia for future generations while advocating for preservation policy in all levels of government and consulting on preservation projects. We've found that connecting people to places is the best way to connect to the past, and we welcome visitors from across the country and around the world to Virginia each year.

We're in the unique position of owning six historic sites in Virginia open to the public. Those include Scotchtown, the home of Patrick Henry during the American Revolution and where he wrote his famous "Give Me Liberty" speech; the John Marshall House, where Chief Justice Marshall cemented the Judiciary as a third and equal branch of government; Smith's Fort, site of a second fort built by John Smith and the location of a farm purchased by formerly enslaved families during Reconstruction; Bacon's Castle, the nation's oldest brick house built in 1665; Cape Henry Lighthouse, the first federal works project after the ratification of the Constitution; and Jamestown, where it all began in 1607 with the first permanent English settlement in North America.

Both Cape Henry Lighthouse and our site at Jamestown are surrounded by federal land, and partnerships with these federal agencies is critical - and necessary - to make these locations accessible to the public. We are always looking for opportunities to enhance our cooperation with our federal partners to advance our shared mission.

Jamestown was one of the first sites our group acquired back in 1893. We stepped in to protect the birthplace of America 40 years before the creation of Colonial National Historical Park. Since we launched the Jamestown Rediscovery project in 1994, our world-renowned archaeology team has uncovered over 5 million artifacts from our site, revealing new information relating to the founding of the United States. We maintain a unique partnership with the National Park Service to allow guests to visit our 25 acres in the heart of Jamestown Island along with 1,500 acres stewarded by the NPS. We share facilities, research, and plan public programs together.

Old Cape Henry Lighthouse was acquired by Preservation Virginia from the federal government in 1930 with the goal of operating it as a museum. At the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay, our lighthouse is located on Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story. Through a partnership

with the military, the City of Virginia Beach, and Preservation Virginia, guests are allowed access to the lighthouse through a shuttle bus system following a security screening. We also provide special events and programs for military families and perform outreach to local schools. Cape Henry is famous in history for several reasons: it was the site where John Smith and 103 settlers first landed in 1607 and was also the location of the famous Battle of the Capes in 1781, which drove off a British resupply fleet and helped secure victory at Yorktown. Our lighthouse is an appropriate vantage point to discuss these events and their impacts on American history.

America's 250th anniversary is an exciting time to be in historic preservation. At Jamestown, we're grateful for an America250 Semiquincentennial Grant to help preserve and interpret the original statehouse on Jamestown Island. After the capital was moved to Williamsburg in 1699, the statehouse fell into disrepair, but we're preserving this site to commemorate the first representative governing body in North America. The seeds of representative government planted at Jamestown in 1619 would inspire those who forged a new nation during and after the American Revolution.

We continue to identify ways to engage a larger public through the 250th anniversary, and we welcome future partnerships with the National Park Service, state agencies, Tribal leaders, and local philanthropists to see this work through.

In our case, we have another significant anniversary to commemorate this year. 2026 also marks the 350th anniversary of Bacon's Rebellion, which some have called the first American Revolution. To commemorate the two anniversaries, we're partnering with local institutions like Virginia Humanities, the College of William & Mary, and the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation. We're also grateful for the partnership of several federally recognized Native American Tribes in Virginia on this effort, including the Pamunkey Indian Tribe, Rappahannock Indian Tribe, and Nottoway Indian Tribe. Strategic partnerships with other organizations and universities help spread the weight of costs and elevate programs through coordinated marketing campaigns.

Financially we're a three-legged stool, with our budget made up of donations, earned income through ticket sales, and an endowment which we continue to grow. Organizations like us rely heavily on the generosity of private donors, including individuals and family foundations.

We also partner closely with Virginia's official State Historic Preservation Office, the Department of Historic Resources. Through the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, each state is mandated to carry out initiatives like the Section 106 process and reviews of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. We assist the Department in their work and advocate for their budget, of which 20% comes from the Federal government through the Historic Preservation Fund.

Administered by the National Park Service, the Historic Preservation Fund is the federal

government's main vehicle for supporting historic preservation work and is absolutely critical. In addition to helping fund state historic preservation offices, it provides federal grant funding through programs like Save America's Treasures. Each year in March, we advocate for this funding before Congress as part of Preservation Advocacy Week and connect local groups to grant opportunities, assisting them with applications as needed.

With Preservation Virginia, we're not just educating at one museum, or even one locality. We cover the entire state, the state where it all began.

Thank you so much.