

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

February 19, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

I write to you today regarding the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) decision to close the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Federal Archives and Records Center in Seattle, Washington. This decision was made on the recommendation of the Public Buildings Reform Board (PBRB) without necessary engagement with many of the stakeholders most affected including, but not limited to, the Native American Tribes I ask you today to direct the OMB to halt this decision until all relevant stakeholders are properly notified and given the chance to speak before an informed decision can be made.

The PBRB and the General Services Administration (GSA) did engage in a preliminary outreach plan according to their recommendation summary, but it was not sufficient. Input was solicited from the developer community to understand and clarify the redevelopment plans for the site, but communities with treasured, historical records at risk were not appropriately engaged. . We must include the Tribes of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington in these discussions, and allow for government-to-government consultations with the impacted Tribal governments and organizations before selling this facility. There are 272 federally recognized Tribes in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska—excluding them from this process would leave a lasting and negative impact. The National Archives not only stores the artifacts of the local Tribes and people, they serve as a means of access to important records on a broad reach of topics, many of which can only be viewed in person at these facilities.

Taking away the Federal Archives and Records Center from the Pacific Northwest and relocating critical and hard-to-reproduce cultural information over 1,100 miles away does not serve our communities' best interests. We must work together to prevent further marginalization and erasure of our Tribal Nations' history here in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to halt the OMB's closure of this facility and work with myself and other Members of Congress to outline a plan with the PBRB and GSA to identify and include all stakeholders in this decision before we remove any further regional history.

Sincerely,



Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress