

Washington, D.C. - The U.S. House of Representatives is expected to pass the Preserve America and Save America's Treasures Act tonight with a near unanimous vote.

The bill, sponsored by

Rep. Brad Miller (NC-13)

, establishes two grant programs under which the Secretary of the Interior, in partnership with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, can provide grants for "brick and mortar" preservation and to support preservation efforts through heritage tourism, education, and historic preservation planning activities.

The Preserve America and Save America's Treasure Act authorizes appropriations totaling \$300 million over the next four years for two the grant programs administered by the National Park Service (NPS). These grants are available to state, local, and tribal governments as well as private organizations.

In North Carolina, a Save America's Treasures grant helped preserve the iconic F.W. Woolworth Building in Greensboro, North Carolina. On February 1, 1960, four African-American students from North Carolina A&T sat down at the lunch counter and refused to leave until they were treated the same as white customers. Within two months, the sit-in at the Woolworth's counter had sparked 15 similar demonstrations in nine other states and became a pivotal moment in the civil rights movement. The F.W. Woolworth Building and its lunch counter are important symbols of the civil rights movement, and should be preserved for future generations.

"When historic buildings and neighborhoods are allowed to deteriorate, we lose a part of our past and our future forever," said **Rep. Miller**. "Protecting our nation's historic buildings, in turn, leads to community revitalization."

The Preserve America and Save America's Treasures Act was introduced in the Sewall-Belmont House, which was designated a National Historic Landmark for its significance in American history. It was there that the National Woman's Party, led by Alice Paul, headquartered their movement to battle for a woman's right to vote. A leaking roof and other structural damage once threatened this national symbol of women's suffrage. The Sewall-Belmont House was the first building to receive funding as a "Save America's Treasures" project.

"Vacant and underutilized historic structures and collections are in need of rehabilitation and can serve as catalysts for attracting new investment in growing communities," **Miller** added. "Whether it is preserving main streets of forgotten downtowns, or re-using historic properties as affordable housing, preservation makes history come alive in communities around our country."

Congressman Miller and Rep. Mike Turner of Ohio introduced the Preserve America and Save America's Treasures Act as Co-chairs of the Congressional Historic Preservation Caucus. The Congressmen started the bipartisan caucus, now with 120 members, as a place to discuss and advance preservation issues. The Save America's Treasures program was started as part of the White House Millennium Council chaired by then First Lady Hillary Clinton. The current administration, led by First Lady Laura Bush, created the Preserve America program to support communities in their effort to preserve cultural and natural heritage by providing funding for heritage tourism and preservation planning.

[\(Click Here for video of the Floor Speech \)](#)

