



Heritage Caucus

March 10, 2020

Mr. Russ Vought Acting Director
Office of Management Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Re: National Archives and Records Administration facility at Sand Point Seattle Closure resolution

To whom it may concern,

It has come to our attention that the National Archives and the federal Public Buildings Reform Board (PBRB) intends to close and sell the National Archives and Records Administration facility at Sand Point in Seattle and move the archive and its records to existing facilities in California and Missouri.

We are strongly opposed to this decision and urge the PBRB and National Archives to halt any action until stakeholders have an opportunity to weigh-in.

NARA has been entrusted with the regional federal documents, records and archival materials, including treaties, surveys, land boundaries, and titles in the Pacific Northwest region. These records are a valuable resource for the people and tribes of our region, and the facility at Sand Point should not be closed or relocated without first consulting with the people of Washington and all affected Native American tribes.

Furthermore, it is imperative that the records at NARA remain in the state of Washington and available to the public.

These records define and document the terms and relationships between the federal government and native people and tribes of the Pacific Northwest. They include census records, citizenship and immigration documents, military and government agency documents. Many of the federal court records at NARA record the personal lives and family information for Washington's residents going back generations, and access to this information is crucial for Washingtonians who are studying local history or genealogy.

The NARA facility is staffed with archives and record management professionals who are intimately familiar with the collections and have a unique understanding of Pacific Northwest history and paths of research inquiry, especially those from researchers and students at the nearby Seattle campus of the University of Washington.

Again, given the unique local value of the records and documents at the NARA facility at Sand Point in Seattle, Washington, a decision to remove these documents should not be made lightly or with local input. There is serious concern that these records could be dispersed and become inaccessible to those who need and value them most.

We look forward to hearing your response and working with you to make sure that we reach a solution that works for the people and tribes of the Northwest, as well as the federal government.

Sincerely,

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