



June 18, 2008

The Honorable Jane M. Earll
Chair
Community, Economic and Recreational Development Committee
Room 177, Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3049

Dear Senator Earll:

The Young Preservationists Association of Pittsburgh (YPA) strongly encourages you to support HB 221 and the amendments (A7058) that would change the Historic Preservation Grant Incentive package into a combination of tax credits for income producing properties and a grant for private property owners.

YPA cannot stress enough how beneficial this legislation would be to young owners of historic properties. Approximately one third of all homeowners in the Pittsburgh area are between the ages of 25 and 45. Nearly 80% of all small businesses are started by people under the age of 39. Many of these properties that are being purchased by young people are located in historic districts and along Main Street corridors. An additional incentive in the form of a state grant for young homeowners and business owners would provide a critical resource to encourage further investment in our core communities.

YPA is a regional provider of value-added preservation services that encourage the participation of young people in historic preservation. Our flagship publication, "Top Ten Best Preservation Opportunities in the Pittsburgh Area," highlights investment opportunities in historic buildings throughout the Pittsburgh region. This report resonates with young people, who are looking to move closer in to older neighborhoods. And as young people seek to establish homes and businesses in older areas, they also seek resources to help them accomplish their goal.

Enclosed is a report that YPA issued, "Unprotected Pittsburgh: Preservation Priorities & Resources for Preserving Pittsburgh's Historic Landmarks." The purpose of this report is threefold: to raise awareness about the benefits of historic preservation, expand legal protections to Pittsburgh's historic structures, and to demonstrate the tools and strategies that citizens have at their disposal to preserve and revitalize their communities. An additional tool that would be of great use to owners of historic properties includes HB 221 that is currently under consideration.

YPA looks forward to assisting you in crafting legislation that provides such incentives to young people, and people of all ages, to restore historic properties across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

Dan Holland
Chief Executive Officer

Enclosures