

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 30, 2014

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to encourage you to designate a portion of the Pullman Historic District in Chicago, Illinois as a unit of the National Park System using your authority under the Antiquities Act. This unique site represents an extraordinary chapter in American history. It touches on labor, industry, and the fight for racial equality, and it deserves national recognition.

The significance of the Pullman Historic Site cannot be understated. Built by founder George M. Pullman to be a "model industrial town", the Pullman site was home to hundreds of workers and their families. It was also home to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first African American labor union. The efforts of these workers, many of whom were former slaves, earned them respect for their exceptional work ethic and skill. At Pullman they helped to build the black middle class and laid the groundwork for the Civil Rights movement of the mid-20th Century.

The ripple effects from the labor unions at the Pullman site affected not only the social fabric of our nation, but also the industrial norms. The railroad strike of 1894 that crippled the entire rail industry and led directly to the creation of a National Labor Day began with Pullman factory workers who were fighting for better working conditions and improved safety. That strike provided workers across America with a blueprint for how to achieve a better working environment and secure fair wages and rights in the workplace.

In light of the national significance of the Pullman Historic Site, it has been recognized as an Illinois State Landmark, a City of Chicago Landmark District, and registered as a National Historic Landmark District. We ask that you add National Park designation to that list, making it Chicago's first National Park and one of the few urban units of the National Park system. The story of Pullman deserves to be shared with every American, and we request that you use your authority under the Antiquities Act to ensure the preservation of this iconic site will continue.

Respectfully,



Mark Kirk
U.S. Senator



Rodney Davis
Member of Congress



Aaron Schock
Member of Congress



Adam Kinzinger
Member of Congress