In Support of
Retaining the Historic Tax Credits (HTCs)

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Testimony to the House Tax Policy Committee
Melissa Milton-Pung, Co-Chair of Public Policy
Michigan Historic Preservation Network – www.mhpn.org

Thank you for accepting my written testimony into the record of this committee. I am writing to you today to request your support for retaining the Historic Tax Credits (HTCs). As a board member of one of Michigan's best-respected cultural organizations, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN), I see the great impact of the Historic Tax Credits across the state. As an Economic Development Project Manager for Washtenaw County Government, and the coordinator for our county-wide program for historic preservation, I know that continuing this program is critical for the sustaining a vital economic recovery in Michigan.

The HTCs create economic opportunity. We know that these tax credits make projects possible where no other financing can work, and that if the Historic Tax Credits are lost, dozens of projects employing hundreds of people will grind to a screeching halt. The potential loss of the credits is a serious threat to communities all across Michigan and the direct jobs created from them. Many architects, skilled trades-people, accountants, consultants, historians, and other professionals pin their livelihood on these projects.
They also live, work, and pay taxes in your home districts.

The HTCs help attract and retain investment in Michigan. The loss of the HTCs would impact a staggering blow to not only the historic preservation industry, but also to the economic vitality of Michigan as a whole. Research continues to show that a strong cultural community is necessary to the revitalization of our economy and our communities. This trend is cited from Thomas Friedman's *The World is Flat* to the plethora of social media focused on an educated, creative class hungry for authentic places with character, opportunity, and edge. This trend has led corporate decisions, such as Google's choice of Ann Arbor for their new facility, to place high value on presence of a strong cultural environment and sense of place for the recruitment a creative workforce. These desirable places are not newly constructed. They are composed of historic buildings, sites unique to our region, and beloved places that make Michigan a truly competitive location choice for business, technology, and entertainment interests.
And the fact is, without the Historic Tax Credits, rehab of our important historic places will simply stop.

I believe strongly in the impact of the Historic Tax Credits on Michigan's economy. For every $1.00 of tax credit issued, $11.37 of DIRECT investment is generated into our local communities. These useful mechanisms for reinvestment in Michigan have touched a diversity of communities across the state, from urban to rural, from dying small town Main Streets to defunct manufacturing plants, and from Midtown Detroit to Grand Rapids' Heartside Neighborhood. We have witnessed their impact rippling through the economy by the number of properties returned to the tax rolls, the increased foot traffic in formerly empty districts, and the regained vibrancy in the places that define Michigan.
Please help us retain this important economic development tool.

Thank you for your time and attention regarding this important matter.

CONTACT INFO:
Melissa Milton-Pung, *Project Manager*
Washtenaw County Economic Development & Energy
110 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48104
miltonpungm@ewashtenaw.org -- (734)222.6878