

March 11, 2026

History Colorado  
State Historical Fund  
1200 Broadway  
Denver, CO 80203

Dear State Historical Fund Review Committee,

I am writing to express strong support on behalf of Alamosa County for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area's application to the State Historical Fund to support the nomination of the Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos (SPMDTU) Headquarters as a National Historic Landmark.

The Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos, founded in 1900, is one of the oldest and most influential Hispano mutual aid societies in the United States. For more than a century, the SPMDTU Headquarters in Antonito has served as a center for community organizing, mutual support, cultural preservation, and advocacy for Spanish-speaking workers and families throughout the San Luis Valley and northern New Mexico. The building stands as a powerful symbol of grassroots leadership and resilience within Hispano communities that faced discrimination and exclusion from many social and economic institutions.

Designating the SPMDTU Headquarters as a National Historic Landmark would recognize the national significance of the organization's contributions to labor rights, mutual aid traditions, civic engagement, and the preservation of Hispano culture in the American Southwest. The nomination will also help ensure that this important story—often underrepresented in traditional preservation narratives—is documented, preserved, and shared with future generations.

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area has demonstrated strong leadership in preserving and interpreting the cultural history of southern Colorado. Their commitment to advancing this nomination will help bring national attention to the important role that Hispano communities have played in shaping the region and the nation.

I strongly encourage the State Historical Fund to support this project. Funding this effort will help document an important historic resource, strengthen preservation planning, and ensure

that the legacy of SPMDTU and the communities it represents continues to be recognized and honored.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vern Heersink, Chairman  
Alamosa County

Cc/file