



PENNSYLVANIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COUNCIL

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April 18, 2022

Paul Edmonson, President and CEO
National Trust for Historic Preservation
2600 Virginia Avenue NW
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Mr. Edmonson,

Last week, the Pennsylvania Archaeological Council (PAC) sent a letter to the Montpelier Foundation expressing our concern over their decision to withdraw from a power sharing arrangement with the Montpelier Descendants Committee (MDC). You were copied on that letter. Unfortunately, we have come to learn that the Montpelier Foundation has chosen to punish key professional staff members of the Foundation who spoke out in support of the MDC by terminating or suspending them. The terminations included Elizabeth Chew, Executive Vice President & Chief Curator, Matt Reeves, Director of Archaeology and Landscape Restoration, Christy Moriarty, director of communications, and Alex Walsh, events manager. Christopher Pasch, archaeology field director, and Mary Furlong Minkoff, Ph.D., director of archaeology and curator of archaeological collections were suspended.

As we noted in our previous letter, PAC serves as the statewide organization of professional archaeologists. We have found that involving all stakeholders results in better archaeology and better story telling. As stewards of this National Trust property, the Foundation's charge includes both the maintenance of the property as well as the telling of its story. The decisions about what takes priority in each can and should be informed by all the voices involved in its history. In light of these recent actions, we cannot see how the Montpelier Foundation can fulfill its charge in managing this historic property. PAC requests that the National Trust sever its relationship with the Montpelier Foundation as quickly as possible and find a new set of partners who can more properly and honestly manage this important place. At a minimum, the National Trust should also issue a letter of apology to the affected employees and work with them to see they are made whole.

Sincerely,

Ira Beckerman, President

Cc: Roy F. Young, II, President & CEO, The Montpelier Foundation