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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

May 2, 2013

Mr. J. Paul Loether
Chief
National Register of Historic Places and
National Historic Landmarks Program
1849 C Street, NW 2280
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Dear Chief Loether,

I write in support of the candidacy of Cherry Grove Community House and Theatre on Fire Island, New York for placement on the National Register of Historic Places. This historic site provided the first setting for a collective gay identity to openly appear in our nation's history.

Located on Fire Island in Brookhaven's beach colony hamlet of Cherry Grove, the Community House and Theater played a critical role in the history of the gay liberation movement in America. Established in 1944 as the headquarters of the Cherry Grove Property Owners Association, it represents the first civic entity to integrate gay and lesbian interests into governance and social life. It also played a major role in the development of gay performing arts, serving as the first American venue, initiated in 1948 and still in operation, to feature productions by gay people for gay and straight audiences.

At the time of the Community House and Theater's establishment, no civil rights organization dedicated to the advocacy of LGBT rights existed in the United States. The Cherry Grove site contributes to a greater understanding of civil rights movements as an evolutionary process towards change and represents a rare and exceptionally significant chapter in the struggle for gay and lesbian civil rights in the United States.

I ask that you please give this your full consideration. If you have any questions, or desire further information, please do not hesitate to contact my staff member Andrew Usyk at (202) 224-4451.

Sincerely,



Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator