



September 1, 2016

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The Honorable Filemon Vela
United States House of Representatives
437 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Congressman Vela:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Preservation Texas, I write in support of the designation of historic Fort Brown as a National Monument.

The original Fort Brown Earthworks, completed in 1846, is the only such fort in the United States built for the U.S.-Mexican War. Fort Brown subsequently played a role in the Civil War, as a training ground during the Spanish-American War and as a point of mobilization during the Mexican Revolution. Its significance to our nation's military history and to the history of our state was recognized by its designation as a National Historic Landmark on December 19, 1960.

Over the last 170 years, the site has been impacted by time, with portions of the earthworks being removed prior to 1950. However, important parts of the fort survive, as well as significant archaeological remains below ground. Collectively, the battlefield sites of Fort Brown, Resaca de la Palma and Palo Alto tell the story of the internationally-strategic importance of the southern boundary of Texas and the Rio Grande delta. Greater public awareness of their importance can have a positive impact on the understanding of the bilateral history of Mexico and the United States while supporting the heritage tourism economy of Brownsville and the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Local and regional organizations have expressed strong support for the long-term preservation of Fort Brown. As the site is already owned by the International Boundary and Water Commission, the potential transfer of management of the site to the National Park Service as a National Monument would be feasible.

We thank you for your efforts to secure the designation of Fort Brown as a National Monument to ensure that this nationally-significant site can be permanently protected.

Sincerely,

Evan R. Thompson
Executive Director

P.O. Box 12832
Austin TX 78711

512.472.0102

preservationtexas.org