



NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES

ARCHIVIST *of the*  
UNITED STATES

DAVID S. FERRIERO

T: 202.357.5900

F: 202.357.5901

*david.ferriero@nara.gov*

July 13, 2017

Dr. James Grossman  
Executive Director  
American Historical Association  
400 A Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Dr. Grossman:

Thank you for your letter of July 10, 2017 raising concerns about upcoming changes in the hours of the research rooms at Archives I and Archives II initially announced on July 5, 2017. We announced our need to close these research rooms on Saturdays using Twitter, Facebook, onsite signage, and our websites.

The changes are necessary as we have been challenged to consistently provide sufficient staff to safely serve records in the research rooms on Saturdays and Mondays. Shifting our staff to a Monday to Friday schedule will address the coverage issue with our existing resources. The challenges we face became even more acute with the recent announcement of thefts from our holdings by a historian and we had to expedite the notification of staff, contractors, and researchers once it became clear that a change was critical. This precluded us from providing you with more advance notice or involving you in our decision.

We do not currently provide either pulls of records or consultation services on Saturdays. As such, researchers seeking to use our records on a Saturday have been required to first visit the research rooms Monday to Friday. Researcher visits on Saturdays have also been declining with time. We have received complaints from researchers about the lack of services on Saturdays as well as requests for expanded hours Monday to Friday.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES *and*  
RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

700 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20408-0001

*www.archives.gov*

We do not have the resources to do both and given the challenges maintaining consistent staffing on Saturdays, we have chosen to focus our resources on the days where we serve the greatest number of researchers.


We announced on July 11, 2017 that we are expanding our research room hours at Archives I and Archives II by an hour each day Monday to Friday effective July 24, 2017. This announcement was made using Twitter, Facebook, onsite signage, our websites, and a press release. By increasing the hours we are open Monday to Friday and adding an additional pull time we will be able to better serve our largest number of researchers. We recognize that these changes will be welcomed by some researchers and that they will represent a significant challenge to others.

You identified being open on a limited number of Saturdays as a possible option. Unfortunately, this is not a viable option as the challenges we face staffing our research rooms on Saturdays would still exist and would likely be compounded.

As you are aware, all Federal departments and agencies are in the midst of assessing their operations as part of a government-wide reform effort. These efforts will bring additional changes and we are committed to meeting the objectives of the reform effort and continuing our transformation of our operations to meet the changing ways records are created and used by government and researchers alike.

Thank you for contacting me about this important matter. Please direct any questions to William J. Bosanko, Chief Operating Officer, who can be reached via 301-837-3604 and [william.bosanko@nara.gov](mailto:william.bosanko@nara.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. S. Ferriero", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

DAVID S. FERRIERO  
Archivist of the United States