



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

207 STATE HOUSE  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

**BRUCE RAUNER**  
GOVERNOR

March 22, 2016

David C. Eustis, President/CEO  
Heartlands Conservancy  
406 East Main  
Mascoutah, Illinois 62258

Dear Mr. Eustis:

Cahokia Mounds, located near Collinsville, Illinois, was home to one of the most advanced prehistoric native civilizations north of present-day Mexico. Cahokia Mounds, with its numerous non-contiguous sites, is teeming with potential for future archaeological discoveries, and therefore is incredibly deserving of designation as either a National Monument or unit of the National Park Service. As Governor of Illinois, I would like to offer my strong support for a national designation for the surviving structures that stand as remnants of the Mississippian culture.

Through the efforts of dedicated archaeologists and historians, former sites of Aztec, Incan, and Mayan communities have been unearthed and preserved. As a result, a wealth of knowledge of these historic civilizations has followed. Unfortunately, sites connected to prehistoric Mississippian communities have not fared as well in regard to preservation. Today, the remains found at Cahokia Mounds are the best surviving examples of a culture that was almost lost to time. Recently, archaeological evidence was discovered among the National Stockyards in East St. Louis. Designating Cahokia Mounds as a National Monument or unit of the National Park Service could mean preserving the chance for similar discoveries in the future.

My office has received numerous letters of support for Cahokia Mounds to be recognized with a National Park Service designation. Please consider this letter as my strong support for the national designation of Cahokia Mounds and other area Mississippian sites in order to preserve the historical and archaeological significance of these locations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Rauner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bruce" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Rauner".

Bruce Rauner  
Governor, State of Illinois