**We have work to do**: Even if the national elections had gone a different way, with Secretary Clinton and Senator Kaine in the leadership, and the Democrats regaining Senate control, there was still going to be plenty of work to do. Now the need is that much more urgent, but we have never been more impressed with the intellectual firepower, communication talent, and most of all, the passion that our members bring to bear in shaping policy trajectories.

As an association, we have **two sources of power**. We have the **power of voice**, and we have a **convening power**.

As an Association, we are concerned about public support for research and training, which are so important to our members. We monitor current events and policy developments, and we use the power of voice in issuing position statements on behalf of the Association’s 10,000 members, such as:

* Reaffirming [our commitment to academic freedom](http://www.americananthro.org/ParticipateAndAdvocate/AdvocacyDetail.aspx?ItemNumber=21024)
* Affirming our [commitment to shaping policy outcomes rooted in core values of mutual respect and equal rights](http://www.americananthro.org/ParticipateAndAdvocate/AdvocacyDetail.aspx?ItemNumber=20963)
* Supporting [collaborative efforts to protect cultural heritage](http://s3.amazonaws.com/rdcms-aaa/files/production/public/FileDownloads/pdfs/cmtes/DECLARATION_ON_THE_NEED_TO_PROTECT_AND_SAFEGUARD_CULTURAL_HERITAGE_IN_THE_AMERICAS_AND_THE_CARIBBEAN_TFCH_2016_11_22.pdf) in the Americas and worldwide
* Offering [specific contributions to policy solutions](http://s3.amazonaws.com/rdcms-aaa/files/production/public/FileDownloads/pdfs/cmtes/commissions/CCTF/upload/AAA-Statement-on-Humanity-and-Climate-Change.pdf) concerning humanity and climate change
* [Opposing the use of torture](http://www.americananthro.org/ParticipateAndAdvocate/AdvocacyDetail.aspx?ItemNumber=21047&navItemNumber=659) on human rights grounds

We will use the Association’s convening power to bring people together to share ideas on collective action that

* people can organize through their institutions and communities
* the Association can undertake with the repertory of tools it has available
* the Association can take by joining our voices with those of other sister societies equally concerned about the new administration’s stated goals of undoing government policies and practices that move us towards a more just and sustainable society. Among the many collaborative partnerships in which we take part:
  + We are a governing member and active participant with the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), which is working hard to advocate for research support provided by the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. COSSA is also working hard to increase public awareness about the importance of fully funding the Federal Statistical Agencies, on which we depend for high quality data about American society and the world.
  + We are also active participants in the National Humanities Alliance, which is working hard to advocate for public support of the humanities.

As an association, we publish high-quality scholarship, and offer our deep reservoir of subject matter expertise to inform public conversations in a number of policy-relevant domains, including:

**Environmental Resource Protection and Global Environmental Change**

* Our [Task Force Report](http://s3.amazonaws.com/rdcms-aaa/files/production/public/FileDownloads/pdfs/cmtes/commissions/upload/GCCTF-Changing-the-Atmosphere.pdf) and [Statement on Humanity and Climate Change](http://s3.amazonaws.com/rdcms-aaa/files/production/public/FileDownloads/pdfs/cmtes/commissions/CCTF/upload/AAA-Statement-on-Humanity-and-Climate-Change.pdf) put forth important insights about adaptations to global environmental change, as well as workable solutions to mitigating the worst of climate change’s effects.
* Specific policy goals to be achieved based on the application of a deep and broad body of anthropological knowledge include designing institutional interventions by anticipating:
* The ways in which climate change intensifies underlying problems (poverty and economic disparities, food and water security, and armed conflict) and accelerates migration, destabilizes communities and nations, and exacerbates the spread of infectious diseases.
* The ways in which the impacts of climate change are distributed unevenly, and with particular weight on those already affected by existing vulnerabilities, including children, the elderly, those who live with handicaps and restrictive health conditions, and those who do not have sufficient means to move or change their lives. The most vulnerable will be uprooted or forced to move. As climate impacts intensify, public expenditures needed for emergency aid and restoration will escalate.
* Ways to shape human actions and choices that have driven climate change by emphasizing fossil fuel as the primary energy source, creating a culture of consumerism, and favoring land use practices that undermine ecological resilience.

# Highest Priority Legislative and Regulatory Issues

Currently, our highest priority legislation includes proposals that would:

* Withdraw US participation in the Paris Climate agreement or exit the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
* Reduce or eliminate funding to support the US Global Change Research Program and its Social Sciences Committee
* Reduce or eliminate funding to support the National Science Foundation’s inter-directorate funding for research on human dimensions of global environmental change.
* Privatize public lands or transfer management of public lands from federal to state control, because protections under NEPA would no longer apply to decisions about resources on those lands
* Expand or exempt classes of development projects or agency programs from NEPA review
* Alter the NEPA review process in ways that limit public consultation, consideration of affected resources, or opportunities for mitigation

The highest priority regulatory proceedings, where we will consider submitting comments based on anthropological scholarship, include:

* Agency rules that govern the federal collection of race and ethnicity data where changes in such data collection would affect the ability to analyze environmental justice impacts and trends
* Agency rules that affect the implementation of NEPA

In addition, AAA has Conference of Parties credentials with the UN’s International Framework for Climate Change, which we make available for experts among our members. AAA co-sponsored a March 2017 workshop on social science contributions with the US Global Change Research Group, an inter-agency working group of the Federal government. We will continue to follow up with this group and the collaborations forged in the context of the March 2017 workshop.

**Race, Social Justice, and Immigration**

# Highest Priority Legislative and Regulatory Issues

Currently, our highest priority legislation includes proposals that would:

* Reduce the incidence and prevalence of racially-motivated extrajudicial police violence
* Affect public funding available for support of statistics on violent deaths
* Affect public funding available for community policing and trauma-informed community wellness service delivery programs
* Change the Immigration and Naturalization Act, affecting the protection of refugees, promoting diversity, reunifying families, and affecting the US workforce

The highest priority regulatory proceedings, where we will consider submitting comments based on anthropological scholarship, include:

* Agency rules on immigration policy that are based on religious affiliation, sexual orientation, national origin, family status, and workforce-related skills
* Agency rules on the collection of data concerning race and ethnicity

The Association issued a [1998 Statement on Race](http://www.americananthro.org/ConnectWithAAA/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2583), which drew on a considerable body of anthropological knowledge and concluded that racial distinctions are derived from cultural constructs and have no meaningful basis in biological variation. Additional research over the past 20 years since this statement was developed may warrant further refinements in the Association’s views on the relationships between human biological variation and the cultural construction of difference.

In addition, we have undertaken a public education initiative to help change the public conversation through museum exhibitions, town halls, and guidance to teachers and community organizations on the considerable bodies of anthropological knowledge concerning Race and Immigration.

* Our public education initiative includes the “Race: Are We So Different” outreach and engagement program, and “World on the Move: 100,000 Years of Human Migration)
  + The Race travelling exhibition has been hosted by 43 institutions across the US, and viewed by more than a million visitors. Two books have been published, one focusing on human biological variability and the social construction of race, as well as the uses and abuses of race science, and the lived experience of minority community members. The other focuses on practical advice to educators on how to teach about race. The web site, understandingrace.org, receives about 100,000 unique visitors every month.
  + The “World on the Move” project will also develop a traveling exhibition. It has already staged book readings and film screenings; we have a partnership with the Smithsonian that has resulted in our taking part in the Folklife Festival, and a series of community events at the Anacostia Museum.

**Health and Health Disparities**

The major policy focus areas central to the interests of anthropologists in health and medicine include:

* + Health Promotion and Disease Prevention: Policies, practices, and institutions that shape the development and improvement of programs and policies that promote healthy behaviors and healthy communities.
  + Health Outcomes, Cost, and Effectiveness Evaluations: policies, practices, and institutions that determine the way in which we evaluate outcomes and effectiveness of programs / practices / interventions / technologies designed to improve health systems, diagnostic, treatment, and disease management.
  + Global and Local Health Systems: funds that support health system development, enhance health system capacity to respond to:
    - emerging infectious and zoonotic diseases, growing chronic diseases, and other pressing global health needs throughout the world.
    - Health information systems for priority planning, medical device development healthcare workforce development for effective service delivery in a variety of settings.

# Highest Priority Legislative and Regulatory Issues

Currently, our highest priority legislation includes proposals that would:

* Reduce or eliminate funding for affordable health care for all residents of the US
* Reduce or eliminate funding for reproductive health care for women in developing countries
* Reduce or eliminate funding for social and behavioral science research in the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and other agencies of the US Public Health Service.
* Reduce or eliminate funding for the President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

The highest priority regulatory proceedings, where we will consider submitting comments based on anthropological scholarship, include:

* Agency rules concerning the implementation of the Affordable Care Act
* Agency rules concerning the protection of human subjects in health and medical research
* Agency rules concerning limits to the support of reproductive health care in the US and worldwide

We are also proposing an organizational platform that is ready to respond with expert participation as new global health crises emerge.

* Based on experience with the Ebola crisis in West Africa, where we coordinated an international effort to provide in-depth knowledge of local social and cultural practices to support the design of locally appropriate health interventions.
* The Social Mobilization Platform will focus initially on emerging infectious outbreaks in developing settings, for example, Zika virus disease, MERS. We will treat this launch as further proof-of-concept, building on the Ebola experience.

**Cultural Heritage Preservation**

* The Association is committed to raising critically needed global awareness of the destruction of intangible and tangible heritage, and to supporting ethical, sustainable preservation of cultural heritage.
* We are in a distinctive position to achieve substantial improvements in the processes that lead to effective preservation of cultural heritage.
* The Association uses its “convening power” to bring scholars and practitioners together to exchange information about threats to heritage preservation, and about enhancements in training.
* This same convening power can contribute to effective collaborations for monitoring legislative and regulatory activities, and for applying the strength of numbers to effective position statements and calls for action in the face of serious threats.

AAA publishes frequently the results of ongoing anthropological analysis of all aspects of heritage on a global scale.

We support training in cultural heritage preservation by:

* Producing and disseminating educational materials
* Providing training opportunities (e.g., internships, and webinars on heritage issues)
* Collecting and making available syllabi and course modules on cultural heritage
* Offering training opportunities at its Annual Meeting, recruiting subject matter experts to facilitate appropriate workshops
* Identifying training resources offered by other collaborating organizations
* We’re exploring the possibility of establishing a partnership with the World Bank to consult on training to support the newly revised environmental and social safeguard policies that are designed to protect tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

We also keep our members informed of the latest developments by:

* monitoring major legislation or changes in international conventions, charters, and policies impacting cultural heritage
* Maintaining working relationships with relevant U.S. Congressional and Executive Branch officials
* Maintaining working relationships with UNESCO and similar heritage organizations (e.g., ICOMOS, the Inter-American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Forum)
* Maintaining regular communications and working relationships as appropriate with heritage partnerships / coalitions

Consistent with the Board-approved [Task Force Report](http://s3.amazonaws.com/rdcms-aaa/files/production/public/TFCH_Report_Summary.pdf) and [Statement on Principles and Values](http://www.americananthro.org/ParticipateAndAdvocate/AdvocacyDetail.aspx?ItemNumber=20528&navItemNumber=592), AAA has joined with a Coalition on Cultural Heritage protection to achieve specific goals with our advocacy activities:

* Help protect and advance the US historic preservation program, which includes:
  + Safeguarding and ensuring the opportunity for local communities, state governments, tribal governments, and members of the general public to have a meaningful say in federal government undertakings that affect their heritage (Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and National Environmental Policy Act, promoting public lands)
  + Federal funding for historic preservation programs at the state and local level (Historic Preservation Fund).
  + Federal funding and support for federal agencies to conduct more robust and informed early-stage planning that balances preservation values with development concerns (promoting management at a landscape scale, BLM Planning 2.0, technology investments in more usable data about heritage sites)
  + Federal funding for technology investments that will allow the private sector and federal agencies to make more informed decisions about siting of development that could affect heritage sites
* Help protect and advance federal funding for archaeology, anthropology, architecture, and social sciences that supports rigorous scientific research into our nation’s past and programs that bring history and science alive for our younger generations. The US funds basic research on new technologies, cutting-edge research in the humanities and social science, and collaborative cross-discipline innovations.
  + Through the National Science Foundation, federal research funding supports the application of new technologies to pressing questions about our nation’s heritage and funds our nation’s most promising graduate students and faculty.
  + The National Endowment for the Humanities funds historical and archaeological projects that emphasize collaborative research and interpreting archaeological research to the public. Together, these programs ensure that the United States remains a world leader in intellectual and academic thought, promote international diplomacy by fostering research collaborations across the globe, and ensure that American communities continue to learn and benefit from research into our shared history.

# Highest Priority Legislative and Regulatory Issues

Currently, our highest priority legislation includes proposals that would:

* Privatize public lands or transfer management of public lands from federal to state control, because protections under NEPA and NHPA for historic and cultural resources would no longer apply to decisions about resources on those lands
* Expand or exempt classes of development projects or agency programs from NEPA or NHPA review
* Alter the NEPA or NHPA review processes in ways that limit public consultation, consideration of affected resources, or opportunities for mitigation
* Restrict the President’s authority to designate national monuments under the Antiquities Act
* Appropriate funding for the Historic Preservation Fund and agency budget line items that support historic and cultural resources
* Appropriate or restrict funding of NEH, NSF support for archaeology, anthropology, and the social sciences

The highest priority regulatory proceedings, where we will consider submitting comments based on anthropological scholarship, include:

* Agency rules that affect the implementation of NEPA, NHPA, and the Antiquities Act
* Agency rules that affect research support in the social sciences

While many of our members care about international cultural heritage issues, including trade in antiquities and destruction of cultural heritage properties, we lack the resources to lead on these issues. Until we have additional resources, we will need to rely on the coalitions and alliances in which we participate for leadership on these issues.