The John F. Seiberling Award was established in 1986 in the name of Ohio Congressman Seiberling, for his many legislative efforts in support of historic preservation. Seiberling himself received the first award. The award recognizes significant and sustained efforts in historic preservation and the conservation of archeological resources, by an individual or group.

This year, the Register of Professional Archaeologists is honored to award the John F. Seiberling Award to Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio.

Senator Portman has successfully enacted several pieces of legislation that offer pragmatic, bi-partisan solutions to the challenges of balancing development and protection of America’s cultural resources. Together with Sen. Claire McCaskill of Missouri, Sen. Portman authored the Federal Permitting Improvement Act to help speed the permitting process. Better known now as FAST-41, this law aims to streamline regulations without endangering critically important natural and historic resources.

As a Member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Sen. Portman has worked diligently to deliver needed resources to our national park system. He is also the author of the National Park Service Centennial Act, signed into law last year, to help maintain the national park system. This year, he joined with Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia to introduce the National Park Service Legacy Act, bipartisan legislation which would address the $12 billion maintenance backlog at the National Park Service.

Prior to his service in the U.S. Senate, Portman served six consecutive terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. He worked with fellow Ohio Congressman Louis Stokes to pass a bill to preserve sites on the Underground Railroad. The descendent of abolitionists, Sen. Portman was instrumental in securing funding for the Underground Railroad Freedom Center, a museum in downtown Cincinnati that celebrates the heroes who helped slaves escape slavery in the past and those who fight human trafficking today.

Just weeks ago, the Senator was once again on the front lines of historic preservation in the Senate as a leading voice fighting to preserve the historic preservation tax credits in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017.
The Register of Professional Archaeologists is honored to award the John F. Seiberling Award to Sen. Rob Portman for serving as a leading voice for historic preservation in the U.S. Senate.