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A PLEA TO SPARE CAPITOL ANNEX

In a letter to Senate President pro Tempore **Toni Atkins**, D-San Diego, the **California Capitol Historic Preservation Society** pleaded with Atkins to honor the legacy of her predecessor, former Sen. **James Mills**, by opposing the demolition of the Capitol Annex in favor of an underground parking garage.

“We urge you to pay homage to this native son of San Diego and your Senate President pro Tem predecessor by opposing the needless destruction of the Capitol’s east annex, defacement of the historic West Front facade and killing over 60 Capitol Park trees for an expanded Capitol parking garage,” Society Chair **M. Wayne Donaldson** wrote in a letter.

Donaldson is the former chair of President **Barack Obama**’s Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

[The Capitol is undergoing a \\$755 million renovation](#) meant to replace the annex, the warren of legislative offices built in the 1950s. Lawmakers and many Capitol employees regard it as crowded, unsafe and outdated.

The historical society pointed out that Mills “saved California’s Capitol” from being abandoned in favor of a twin-building structure in the early 1970s.

“Now that the economy has changed due to the coronavirus pandemic and past and future forest fires, we believe it is crucial to do the right thing on Mills and the public’s behalf: Save the Capitol and its park by restoring and rehabilitating the Capitol annex and keeping the West Front entrance visually intact. The Capitol and its annex are irreplaceable,” the letter reads.