



Timothy L. Nuvangyaoma  
*Chairman*

Clark W. Tenakhongva  
*Vice-Chairman*

May 7, 2021

Chairman Raul Grijalva  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Bruce Westerman  
Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Support for H.R. 2930, the STOP Act

Dear Chairman Grijalva and Ranking Member Westerman:

On behalf of the Hopi Tribe ("Tribe"), I am writing to express our support for H.R. 2930, the Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act and encourage the House Committee on Natural Resources ("Committee") to advance the bill.

The Hopi people, *Hopisínom*, trace our history back thousands of years, making Hopi one of the oldest living cultures in the world. Today, Hopi people continue to carry out our ancient ceremonial and traditional responsibilities in our language. Therefore, the continued sale of Hopi sacred objects across the United States and the globe strikes at the heart of Hopi culture.

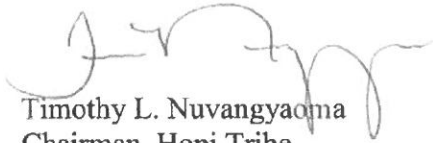
According to Hopi tribal law, the presence of a sacred Hopi object outside of the Tribe's care is sufficient evidence that it has been stolen, because such an item is considered inalienable and communal property. Over the last several years alone, dozens of sacred Hopi items have appeared in auction houses across the globe.

Existing laws, the court system, and diplomacy have generally proven unsuccessful in the Hopi Tribe's efforts to protect our cultural resources. For instance, despite our best efforts to prevent 70 sacred Hopi objects from being auctioned in Paris, France in April 2013, the highly coveted items were ultimately sold for over \$1 million.

The STOP Act would provide a valuable tool in our efforts to have sacred objects returned to their rightful place. It would confirm the President's authority to enter into agreements to request the return of sacred tribal objects from other countries; prohibit the export of cultural items obtained in violation of current laws; increase penalties under current law; and establish interagency and tribal working groups.

In closing, the Tribe extends its appreciation to Indigenous Peoples Subcommittee Chair Leger Fernandez and Ranking Member Young for introducing the STOP Act. We urge the Committee to quickly approve H.R. 2930. Enactment of the STOP Act would help end the illegal trafficking of sacred objects and create avenues for such objects to be returned to their rightful place.

Respectfully,



Timothy L. Nuvangyaoma  
Chairman, Hopi Tribe



Clark W. Tenakhongva  
Vice Chairman, Hopi Tribe

Cc: The Honorable Teresa Leger Fernandez, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Don Young, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Tom O'Halleran, U.S. House of Representatives