

Opening Statement

Chair Grijalva – 05.12 SCIP Leg Hrg (H.R. 5444)

- Thank you, Madame Chair. I want to convey my gratitude to you and the Acting Ranking Member for hosting this hearing on a crucial piece of legislation.
- I also want to commend and thank Representative Davids for introducing H.R. 5444, the *Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act*.
- Before I begin, I would like to enter into the record a letter of support for this legislation from the American Bar Association.
- Now, the history of this country and its atrocities against Indigenous People are horrific and hard to hear. The *Boarding School Era* is no different.
- This is a topic that most of Indian Country is very familiar with, unfortunately.
- I commend my colleagues for having this hearing.
- Just yesterday, the Department of the Interior released its first volume of an investigative report into the history and records of federal Indian boarding schools.
- Thanks to Secretary Deb Haaland's efforts, the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative is a significant first

step the U.S. is taking in acknowledging its role in this painful history.

- **But there is still much work to do.**
- **I hope that this hearing will provide Americans a glimpse of what this government perpetrated against Indigenous Peoples for generations, all to accomplish ‘assimilation’ and removal.**
- **Importantly, I also hope this hearing will begin to give some healing to all those affected by the *Boarding School Era*.**
- **Thank you to our witnesses for your bravery in sharing your experiences with us, and I yield the remainder of my time.**