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Director of Government Affairs

AUG 29 1991

American
Association
of
Museums

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August 27, 1991

The Honorable Manuel Lujan
Secretary
Department of Interior
18th & C Streets, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The undersigned represent organizations principally affected by P.L. 101-601, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. We are writing to urge you to take prompt and positive action regarding several key provisions contained in the act. They are: a) funding for Section 10 -- grants programs to museums and tribes; b) the naming and establishment of the Review Committee created by Section 8; and c) drafting and promulgation of regulations.

Funding for Museums and Tribes: Section 10 of the Act authorizes the Secretary of Interior to make grants to tribes to assist in the repatriation process and to make grants to museums to assist in the inventory process required by the law. Because the law was not enacted until November 16, 1990, it was too late for funds for these purposes to be included in the Administration's FY '91 budget. Similarly, Congress is not expected to appropriate funds for these purposes for FY '92. Your inclusion of monies in the Department of Interior's FY '93 budget request will greatly enhance the possibility of Congressional funding for FY '93. Museum and Native American leaders request that a total of \$10 million be included in the Department's budget request, to be divided equally between the two granting programs authorized under Section 10.

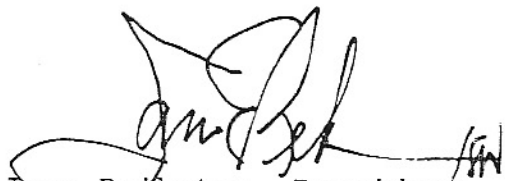
Review Committee: Section 8 of P.O. 101-601 calls for the establishment of a Review Committee, which will monitor the inventory and repatriation processes as well as consult with the Secretary of Interior on development of regulations. The law called for establishment of the Committee within 120 days of enactment, i.e., by March 16, 1991. The Committee will serve a key role in the smooth implementation of this important law and the development of regulations. Once nominations are received, we urge you to accelerate the process of naming the Committee and getting its work underway.

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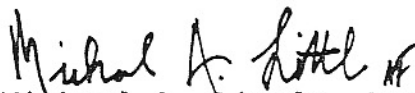
Regulation Drafting: The Act requires the Secretary of Interior to promulgate regulations within twelve months of enactment (i.e., by November 16, 1991). The progress to date would indicate that meeting this target will be most unlikely unless a special effort is made. We urge you to give the National Park Service the resources necessary to do the job and to make prompt and thorough drafting of regulations a priority. The Act contains a number of deadlines that must be met by museums, for instance. Meeting these deadlines will be difficult without clear regulations developed and promulgated on or close to schedule.

P.O. 101-601 was the result of agreements made by parties that are most affected by the law, all of whom are among the signatories to this letter. We urge the timely and committed cooperation of the Department and your office in helping meet the spirit of the accords that resulted in the law.

Respectfully submitted,



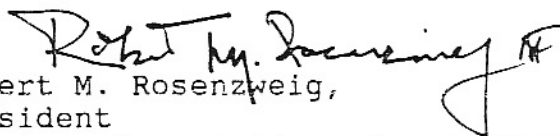
Jane Buikstra, President
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Michael A. Little, President
American Association of
Physical Anthropologists



Edward H. Ahle, Jr.,
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American Association of
Museums



Robert M. Rosenzweig,
President
American Association of
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Martha Sharp Joukowsky,
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Archaeological Institute
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Jack Trope, Staff Attorney
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Eric Hertfelder, Executive
Director
National Conference of State
Historic Preservation Officers



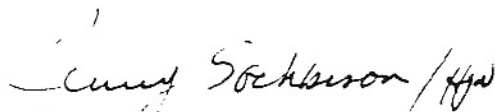
Gay Kingman, Executive
Director
National Congress of American
Indians



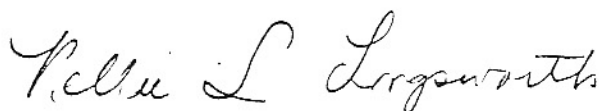
J. Jackson Walter, President
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Nellie L. Longworth, President
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