



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Tribal Leader:

On November 29, 2022, Congress passed the Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-196. The STOP Act aims to prevent the international export of cultural items prohibited from trafficking under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA).

The STOP Act directs the Department of the Interior (Department), in coordination with the Departments of State, Justice, and Homeland Security, to regulate export of Tribal archaeological resources and cultural items, facilitate voluntary repatriation of Native American tangible cultural heritage to Indian Tribes in the United States, and to operate a program (authorized up to \$3 million annually) to carry out core functions of issuing export certificates, consulting with Tribes, managing databases and workflows, collecting fees and fines, coordinating interagency and Native committees, training, temporary holding (repository) and other operational requirements.

In 2023, the Department held five consultation sessions and accepted written comments on the development of a draft regulation for the STOP Act. The Department is now inviting you to consult on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for the Department's STOP Act regulations, 25 C.F.R. part 1194. The draft proposed regulation reflects input and recommendations provided by Tribes during the Tribal consultations hosted by the Department.

Enclosed to this letter you will find a copy of the draft regulation. This document is being provided to you for advance review but does not yet have the force and effect of law. The proposed regulation has been transmitted to the Office of the Federal Register (OFR) for review and is pending filing for public inspection at the OFR and publication in the *Federal Register*. Consequently, the attached version of the regulation is subject to change during the OFR review process. Only the version published in the *Federal Register* is the official regulation. Once published, the regulation can be found here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/indian-affairs-bureau#documents>.

The Department will conduct two consultation sessions listed below and will accept oral and written comments. Please note that these Tribal consultations will be closed to the press and the public to protect confidential information that may be discussed during the sessions. We look forward to speaking with you at one or more of the following sessions:

Date	Time	Location
Monday, November 18, 2024	1:00 pm ET	Virtual: https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsd-murTkrEoCEm5Y2To4t7GKtXSRhCnQ

Tuesday, November 19, 2024	3:00 pm ET	Virtual: https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJltdOmqjkkqHaI5eOnhZTOtLE2GojpXIow
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We welcome your written comments, which should be submitted by email to consultation@bia.gov no later than 60 days from the date of publication of the official regulation in the *Federal Register*. Once published, the official regulation will contain the actual written comment period end date. In addition, we will post that same date on the Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Consultation webpage: <https://www.bia.gov/service/tribal-consultations/safeguard-tribal-objects-patrimony-stop-act-notice-proposed>.

If you have any questions regarding this effort, please contact Joaquin Gallegos, Advisor to the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs via email at joaquin.gallegos@ios.doi.gov, or Rachel Brown, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary-Policy, Management, and Budget via email at rachel.brown@ios.doi.gov.

We look forward to receiving your input on this matter.

Sincerely,



Bryan Newland
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs

Joan Mooney
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Policy,
Management, Budget

Enclosure