



Laura L. Lott  
President & CEO  
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January 28, 2022

The Honorable Charles F. Sams III  
Director  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Director Sams,

Congratulations on your historic nomination and confirmation to serve as the Director of the National Park Service. The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) and our member organizations are excited to work with you to advance our shared priorities to preserve the nation's rich natural and cultural resources.

Toward that end, we have closely followed the process underway to potentially update Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation (NAGPRA) regulations. Museums across the country continue and are ready and willing to do all that they can to facilitate the identification and safe, respectful return of native remains and sacred objects to tribes and other organizations.

We are, however, concerned about our ability to complete this mission following any updates to the regulations. As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on our institutions, and despite federal assistance for shuttered venues and other programs, we continue to face major challenges, including financial impacts and limited staff.

To ensure that museums will be able to continue to expeditiously and properly repatriate remains under any new regulations, we respectfully request that the National Park Service (NPS) and the Biden Administration include in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget request ample funding for the grant programs that will support institutions in this endeavor. In speaking with our members, we understand that the estimated costs associated with regulation changes that may be finalized in the coming months will be substantial. Specifically, in order to undertake repatriation efforts in a timely manner that complies with any new regulations, museums will require appropriate staff and resources. In addition to increases in the overall funding levels for Consultation/Documentation and Repatriation Grants, we request that NPS also consider prioritizing increases in the allowable awards for these grants.



AAM and our members are committed to both the letter and spirit of NAGPRA. We look forward to working with you toward increasing understanding between museums, Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations as well as working together to promote understanding in American society.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura L. Lott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "L".

Laura L. Lott