

Dear Native Hawaiian Community Leader:

For many decades, Native American cultural items (under current U.S. law the term Native American includes Native Hawaiian) have appeared, and continue to appear, at auctions outside of the United States. The theft and trafficking of Native American cultural items is unacceptable, and yet the limited scope of existing federal laws poses challenges to addressing the issue. To begin to identify potential solutions, we invite you to discuss whether and how amending the U.S. legal framework governing the export, theft, and trafficking of Native American cultural items would facilitate the repatriation of these items.

We, at the Department of the Interior, in coordination with an interagency working group, which includes representatives from the Departments of State, Justice, and Homeland Security, have developed a [draft summary of legal options](#). This draft summary responds to a finding and corresponding recommendations in the August 2018 Government Accountability Office (GAO) Report to Congress entitled "[Native American Cultural Property: Additional Agency Actions Needed to Assist Tribes with Repatriating Items from Overseas Auctions](#)" that U.S. Federal laws do not explicitly prohibit exporting Native American cultural items, and those laws that address theft and trafficking are limited in scope.

We invite you to participate in a listening session to review the draft summary and to hear other ideas on whether and how the U.S. legal framework governing the export, theft and trafficking of Native American cultural items should be amended on March 24, 2020 at 10:00 am Hawai`i Standard Time. If you are interested in participating in the listening session please send your contact information to kaiini.kaloi@ios.doi.gov for call-in information by March 13, 2020. If you would like to submit written input, please submit your comments by email to kaiini.kaloi@ios.doi.gov by 6:00 pm Hawai`i Standard Time on March 28, 2020.

Ka'iini Kaloi

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