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CITY OF LOMITA

ADMINISTRATION

INTERIM CITY MANAGER
JOE HOEFGEN

March 26, 2024

Honorable Chair Harriet Hageman (R-Wyo.)
Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs
House Committee on Natural Resources
5131 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 2004004

Re: Oppose H.R. 6859 Gabrielino/Tongva National Recognition Act of 2023

Dear Chair Hageman,

On behalf of the City of Lomita, I am writing to express our opposition to H.R. 6859, by Congress Member Sydney Kamlager-Dove, which will extend federal recognition to individuals claiming ancestry to the Gabrielino/Tongva Nation. The provisions of H.R. 6859 are consistent with Lomita's City Council approved Legislative Platform.

Lomita respects the right of Native American tribes to seek federal recognition through the existing Congress established process to ensure that government-to-government relations are initiated as new sovereign governments seek establishment. Congress created the federal recognition process to protect true Native-Americans and communities like ours, by requiring the Secretary of Bureau of Indian Affairs to review impacts to local governments and provide opportunities for local jurisdictions to provide comments on any positive or negative impacts to their cities.

Should H.R. 6859 be allowed to pass, it would create a precedent allowing individuals who are not Native-American to circumvent the federal recognition process as they would not have to disclose and/or prove their legitimate ancestry to the indigenous peoples of the Gabrielino/Tongva Nation and would be given tribal recognition and federal benefits, including the right to develop and operate Nevada style gambling casinos.

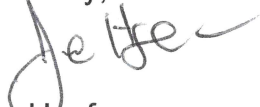
H.R. 6859 will immediately allow these individuals to take up to 300-acres of land in any city in Los Angeles County into trust as reservation land. H.R. 6859 does not limit what land or in which cities land can be taken into trust or require the tribe to adhere to the federal recognition

process and guidelines. There is no requirement that the land taken into trust be contiguous, thus enabling them to acquire land in numerous cities within Los Angeles County up to a cumulative total of 300-acres.

The chosen cities and their neighboring cities would immediately be burdened with all the negative economic, environmental, health, and social consequences without any protections or benefits. H.R. 6859 will also erode the city's authority to control its own affairs, drain the city's public safety services, infrastructure, and other vital programs and services that are funded by local government and its residents. Such adverse consequences must and can be avoided by rejecting H.R. 6859

For these reasons, Lomita joins the South Bay Cities Council of Governments, the League of California Cities, and other agencies and cities in opposing H.R.6859 and appreciates your leadership on this most important issue.

Sincerely,



Joe Hoefgen
Interim City Manager

c. Lomita Mayor and City Council

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