

June 28, 2011

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and our millions of members across the country, we urge you to oppose any legislation that would eliminate or in any way undermine the president's authority under the Antiquities Act to protect objects of historical, cultural and environmental value.

There is a longstanding and bipartisan history of U.S. presidents using the Antiquities Act for the benefit of future generations. Since President Theodore Roosevelt first used it in 1906, 15 presidents – eight Republicans and seven Democrats – have used the Antiquities Act to protect some of our most cherished and recognizable national treasures, including the Statue of Liberty and the Grand Canyon.

Spanning more than a century, presidents from both political parties have regularly used the act to designate approximately 130 national monuments. Among the most recent uses, in 2006 President George W. Bush designated the Papahānaumokuākea Marine Monument, which at 139,000 square miles is the largest national monument ever created.

In addition to protecting vestiges of American history and preserving recreational opportunities for millions of Americans, national monuments can serve to significantly bolster local economies. Recent studies have shown that protecting public lands, and creating national monuments in particular, goes hand in hand with job creation and local economic growth. In a 2011 report, Headwaters Economics reviewed 17 national monuments and found without exception that local economies experienced growth following a monument's designation.

For over 100 years the Antiquities Act has helped our country preserve elements of its history, character, and natural legacy. Please oppose any legislative effort to alter or weaken this important tool and help ensure that our country can continue to protect our natural treasures for future generations.

Sincerely,

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Alaska Association for Historic Preservation

Cindy Shogan, Executive Director
Alaska Wilderness League

John Zvonar, President
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Mark Singleton, Executive Director
American Whitewater

Susan Arnold, Vice President of
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Jeff Williamson, Senior Conservationist
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William H. Doelle, President and CEO
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Friends of Gold Butte

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