

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 23, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump,

We are concerned about the Administration's plan to reduce both the size and protections for the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante National Monuments under the Administration's "Monument Review." National monuments have preserved our country's unique public lands, extraordinary history, and our common culture as a people. We urge you not to reduce their boundaries in any way, to move ahead on developing the management plan for the Bears Ears with the contributions of the Bears Ears Advisory Committee, and to leave the management plan for Grand Staircase-Escalante in place.

A copy of Secretary Zinke's recommendation memo regarding the Monument Review was obtained by both *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal*. According to reports, it proposed reducing the boundaries of both the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante National Monuments. However, the memo was vague, containing few specifics regarding the new boundaries or specific management changes being suggested. Regardless, we feel any changes to these monuments puts the resources and cultural sites they were created to protect at risk.

Secretary Zinke's memo claims that Bears Ears is larger than needed to preserve the thousands of Native American artifacts it contains. But, the tribes that requested the monument asked for a protective area that was 600,000 acres larger than Bears Ears' current boundaries, and archaeologists agree they've barely scratched the surface of the abundance of artifacts in the monument. The thousands of discrete granaries, petroglyphs, pots, and dwellings add up to a complete picture that can only be understood if the boundaries remain intact. Furthermore, the tribes that advocated for the monument continue to support its protection and oppose any changes to the boundary or management.

In the review of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Secretary Zinke claimed its designation has hindered grazing. However, grazing in the area has decreased by a mere one percent since the monument's creation. The report also claims that the monument led to the closure of the Paria River Road. However, the road is located in a designated wilderness area that pre-dates the designation of the monument.

It is clear that any changes to these monuments threaten their important natural, archeological, and cultural resources. We encourage you to maintain the current boundaries and management plans for all our monuments to ensure they will be protected for future generations.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Tom Udall
United States Senator



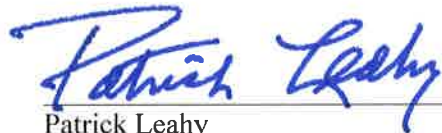
Patty Murray
United States Senator



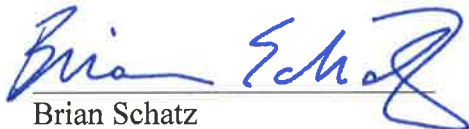
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Cory Booker
United States Senator



Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



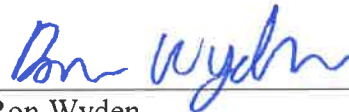
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



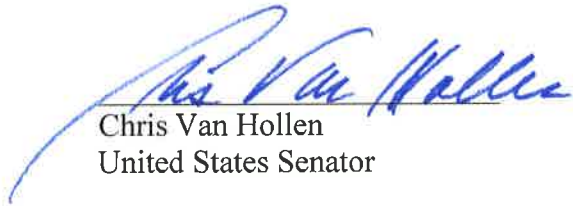
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeff Merkley
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator