

**DOREEN FARR**  
Third District

**PETER ADAM**  
Fourth District, Chair

**AD-HOC SUBCOMMITTEE OF  
THE BOARD**



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
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## **COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA**

July 5, 2016

The Honorable Rob Bishop, Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Raul Grijalva, Ranking Minority  
Member  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Don Young, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska  
Native Affairs  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Dr. Raul Ruiz, Ranking Minority  
Member  
Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska  
Native Affairs  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman and Ranking Minority Members,

We are writing to formally request that you defer consideration of H.R. 1157 and allow good faith discussions currently in progress to continue between the County of Santa Barbara and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. These discussions are the result of the June 17, 2015 hearing on the bill by the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs, whose members strongly encouraged the County to engage the Tribe in discussion. The County heeded that advice and began dialogue to allow the issue to be resolved locally via a mutually beneficial agreement similar to those in place in other California counties. The County and Tribe have held seven meetings since September 2015 and are still in discussions. In fact, as of last week, legal representatives from the County and Tribe continued productive exchanges on a key component of a potential agreement. Congressional action on H.R. 1157 at this point would send a troubling message to all acting in good faith and to the community that has supported this process.

As you are aware, H.R. 1157 is the legislative vehicle to take 1,400 acres, commonly known as Camp 4, within Santa Barbara County, into trust for the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. At the June 17 hearing, our County Executive Officer, Mona Miyasato, expressed a sincere willingness to work with the Tribe to secure housing for tribal members and their lineal descendants. The County's Congressional Representative, Lois Capps, urged the Subcommittee to allow the issue to be resolved locally. This letter serves as a brief update on discussions between the County and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians as well as a formal request of Congress to allow the process entered into in good faith by the County and the Tribe to continue unimpeded by potential legislative activity.

### Summary of Discussions to Date

On August 25, 2015, the Board of Supervisors appointed Third District Supervisor Doreen Farr, who represents the Santa Ynez Valley, and Fourth District Supervisor (and currently Chair of the Board) Peter Adam to serve on

the Ad hoc Subcommittee to engage in discussions with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians related to land use and financial matters of mutual concern regarding the Camp 4 property.

The Ad hoc Subcommittee met with Tribal representatives seven times since September 2015, in public meetings, and through that process, exchanged terms of a potential agreement. (The representatives were then Chairman Vincent Armenta and Vice Chairman Kenneth Kahn, and at one meeting, Councilmember Mike Lopez attended for Chairman Armenta). Given the significant public interest in this matter, the meetings with the Tribe were conducted pursuant to the Brown Act and open to the public. All meeting agendas, correspondence, and videos can be found at <https://www.countyofsb.org/tribal-matters.sbc>. Each of these meetings was well attended by the public and as reported in the local press.

In the discussions, the Ad hoc Subcommittee put forth support for a Fee to Trust acquisition through legislation if agreement were reached on other key issues. While consensus has been reached in several areas, a number of critically important issues are still under discussion.

#### Current Status of Discussions

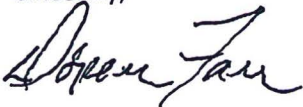
On March 15, 2016, the Ad hoc Subcommittee provided a status report to the full Board of Supervisors, and sought direction on next steps. At that meeting, both the County and the Tribe provided an overall update on discussions. At that time, the Board of Supervisors directed that our County Counsel work with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians to develop enforceable sovereign immunity waiver language. Those meetings of the County's and Tribe's legal representatives have occurred and were being scheduled as recently as last week.

The Board further directed that once that is accomplished to resume scheduling meetings of the Ad hoc Subcommittee and the Tribe. As specifically stated by Supervisor Farr at the March Ad hoc Subcommittee meeting, the update to the full Board was to provide a review of progress of discussions to date, and the action should not be construed to be the end of formal discussions. Staff intends to report back to the Board of Supervisors this summer once appropriate language is drafted regarding the issue of sovereign immunity and then resume productive meetings with the Tribe. Given the recent retirement of Tribal Chairman Vincent Armenta and election of Vice Chairman Kenneth Kahn as his successor, this timing also seems appropriate.

The County is very encouraged by the Tribe's willingness to continue to work toward a resolution of this matter. Therefore, it is imperative that the Tribe and the County of Santa Barbara continue on the path to a mutually beneficial agreement and work in good faith at the local level to resolve these matters so critical to the overall health, safety and general wellbeing of those both the County and the Tribe serve.

Please allow us the ability to continue good faith discussions on a local level in this significant matter and defer action on H.R. 1157.

Sincerely,



Doreen Farr  
Third District Supervisor

Sincerely,



Peter Adam  
Fourth District Supervisor

cc: Members of the House Committee on Natural Resources  
Kenneth Kahn, Chairman, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians