



February 4, 2016

Ms. Laurie E. Pazzano
Repatriation Review Committee Coordinator
Repatriation Review Committee Office
National Museum of Natural History, MRC-112
Smithsonian Institution
P.O. Box 37012
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012

Dear Ms. Pazzano,

The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) appreciates this opportunity to nominate Dr. Vincas P. Steponaitis to serve on the Smithsonian Institution's Native American Repatriation Review Committee.

SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to the research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With more than 8,000 members, SAA represents professional archaeologists in colleges and universities, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members in all 50 states as well as many other nations around the world.

Dr. Steponaitis is a former president of SAA and chair of the Board of Directors of the Archaeological Conservancy. He currently serves as Chair, Curriculum in Archaeology; Director, Research Laboratories of Archaeology; and Professor, Department of Anthropology, at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Though his professional focus is on the archaeology of the Southeastern United States, and the Native American cultures situated within that region, his research has often led to many different places and contexts around the world. As the attached CV will indicate, he has led numerous excavations, administered an extensive number of grants, and served as a reviewer of a very large number of grant proposals and reports, articles, and books.

We believe that Dr. Steponaitis will make a substantial and long-lasting contribution to the important work of the Smithsonian's Repatriation Review Committee. Throughout his long and very distinguished career in archaeology and academia, Dr. Steponaitis has developed an expertise in repatriation law and practice, both at the national and local level, which is without parallel. As a member of SAA's task force (later committee) on repatriation issues, he was intimately involved with the negotiations leading to the creation of both the National Museum of the American Indian Act of 1989, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990, and has remained very engaged in the implementation of both statutes through the

ensuing years. He also served on the Department of Interior's National NAGPRA Review Committee for five years.

A sample of his repatriation-related published works and presented papers includes "Archaeological Perspectives on the NAGPRA: Underlying Principles, Legislative History, and Current Issues" in *Legal Perspectives on Cultural Resources; NAGPRA Inventory of Human Remains and Funerary Objects from Town Creek Indian Mound*; and "Two Decades of NAGPRA: Reflections and Prospects."

The SAA supports the nomination of Dr. Steponaitis to the Repatriation Review Committee in the strongest possible terms. His CV is attached.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diane Gifford-Gonzalez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Diane" written in a larger, more prominent script.

Diane Gifford-Gonzalez, Ph.D.
President