

THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK



**TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY**  
SENATOR, 63<sup>RD</sup> DISTRICT

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STATE-NATIVE AMERICAN RELATIONS  
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November 28, 2022

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York  
Executive Chamber  
New York State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

As Chair of the New York State Senate Subcommittee on State-Native American Relations, I respectfully request that the Unmarked Burial Site Protection Act (S.5701) be signed into law. This bill has been a priority of many Native Nations across New York State; it would provide a process that must be followed in the event that a burial ground, human remains, or funerary objects are discovered during any ground disturbing activities. It will also create the Native American Burial Site Review Committee, providing further protection and oversight of any potential archaeological findings of cultural significance to Tribal Nations.

These protections outlined in the Unmarked Burial Site Protection Act are extremely important to indigenous communities, as it will repatriate any ancestral remains and funerary objects to their respective Tribal Nations. Over the centuries, Tribal Nations have faced tremendous land loss and relocation of their territories, and today many indigenous ancestors are buried in areas that are currently outside of the Tribal Nation boundaries. By enacting the Unmarked Burial Site Protection Act, New York State will respectfully recognize the culturally and historically significant lands of Tribal Nations across the state by prioritizing the protection of any ancestral artifacts found on those lands.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Unmarked Burial Site Protection Act be signed into law to preserve and protect burial grounds, human remains, and funerary objects that may be discovered through any ground disturbing activities. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, I welcome your call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy M. Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Timothy M. Kennedy  
Chair, State-Native American Relations Subcommittee  
New York State Senator, 63rd District

