

To: Secretary Ryan Zinke
Department of Interior

January 15, 2018

From: Tony Knowles
Chair of the NPSAB 2010-2017
Governor of Alaska 1994-2002

I am submitting my resignation as Chair and member of the National Park System Advisory Board. It has been an honor and privilege to serve on this Board for the last seven years with remarkable individuals who have committed their time and talent to ensure the stewardship our National Parks and prepare them for the enjoyment of future generations. We worked closely and productively through 2016 with dedicated National Park Service employees, an inspiring Director and a fully supportive Department. We engaged over a hundred volunteer national experts in education, science, history and anthropology, and park management and planning to help design the right path to meet the challenges and changes for the second century of our National Parks. We emphasized scientific research and mitigation of climate change; engaging young generations; evolving a more diverse culture of park visitors, advocates and employees; bringing our schools to our parks and our parks to our schools; stressing park urbanization; protecting the natural diversity of wildlife; and so much more.

These are the matters on which the Board wanted to brief you and your staff. We also wanted to present evidence of the overwhelming support and participation all across America for the National Park System and this agenda during the 2016 NPS centennial celebration.

For the last year we have stood by waiting for the chance to meet and continue the partnership between the NPSAB and the DOI as prescribed by law. We understand the complexity of transition but our requests to engage have been ignored and the matters on which we wanted to brief the new Department team are clearly not part of its agenda. I wish the National Park System and Service well and will always be dedicated to their success. However, from all of the events of this past year I have a profound concern that the mission of stewardship, protection, and advancement of our National Parks has been set aside. I hope that future actions of the Department of Interior demonstrate that this is not the case.

The following National Park System Advisory Board member share the thoughts stated above and join me in tendering their resignations.

Gretchen Long, Paul Bardacke, Carolyn Finney, Judy Burke, Stephen Pitti, Milton Chen, Belinda Faustinos, Margaret Wheatley