

# TOWN OF TUSAYAN

at the entrance to Grand Canyon National Park



President B. H. Obama  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW,  
Washington, DC 20500

October 6, 2016

Mr. President,

I am the Mayor of the Town of Tusayan, Arizona, at the entrance to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. I am writing you directly to express, on behalf of the Town of Tusayan, how strongly we oppose the formation of the Grand Canyon Watershed Monument, whether through Congressional decree or Executive Order. The Town of Tusayan has demonstrated over time that we are a supportive and respectful neighbor to the nearby Grand Canyon National Park and Kaibab National Forest.

In 2013, due to the shutdown of the federal government, the Grand Canyon National Park, Forest Roads and highways were closed. Tusayan worked closely with the State of Arizona and local businesses to reopen the park. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were forwarded to, and accepted by, the federal government and the Park reopened. These dollars have not been returned to the Town and yet we still would not hesitate to provide support to keep the park open in the future.

Tusayan has over 400 acres of private property containing hotels, restaurants and other businesses that serve over 5 million visitors to the already-protected Grand Canyon National park. If the 1.7-million-acre monument designation is approved, Tusayan would be in the unprecedented situation of being a municipality located directly in the middle of a national monument. This goes against the spirit and intent of the Antiquities Act.

Approximately 98% of the people living in the town of Tusayan and within the National Park do not own the home they live in, as they are residing in employer owned and assigned housing. Tusayan is nearing our goal of providing opportunities for affordable private ownership housing for the residents that make Grand Canyon their home. This housing opportunity is specifically dedicated only to the "locals" who live and work in Tusayan and the National Park, not for second homes, investment homes, or seasonal "getaways". Due to the need to work with federal agencies to acquire easements to access our land, a monument designation would be a huge setback and extreme disappointment to those who have been working hard for years for the opportunity to own their own home.

We have been disappointed in Arizona House of Representative members Kirkpatrick and Grijalva, as well as with some federal agencies because of the lack of dialogue with the Town of Tusayan about this proposed monument legislation or action. In a listening session last year, Rep. Kirkpatrick promised the former Tusayan mayor that she would "carve out" Tusayan from the monument designation. Unfortunately, that never happened, and we haven't heard anything since, from anyone promoting the monument legislation or action.

I am extremely disappointed with Rep. Kirkpatrick going back on her word by supporting Rep. Grijalva's H.R. 3882, and the lack of dialogue between those who have crafted the national monument designation proposal to surround our town.

We believe building a stronger dialogue among the stakeholders that exist in the area would be a more appropriate approach to land management on the Colorado Plateau.

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It would be a disgraceful action if a national monument was designated with a municipality inside of it that had never been consulted on its implications. Federal agencies' land management operations in the area are already under resourced and burdened with hundreds of millions of dollars in deferred maintenance costs.

As the elected representative of our Town, I am asking that you deny this monument designation.

By working together, we will continue to preserve the lands outside the current Grand Canyon National Park boundaries while at the same time ensuring future generations will have the same natural experience as our current visitors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "CS", is written over a horizontal line.

Craig Sanderson  
Mayor  
Town of Tusayan

