

# West Bank Homeowners Association

30042 Airflight Dr. Valley Center, California 92082

(949) 697-3246

rvrrat3@gmail.com

September 1, 2019

Secretary David Bernhardt  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington DC 20240

RE: PL 88-302, 78 Stat. 188  
Disputed Area  
Approval of Tribal Leases

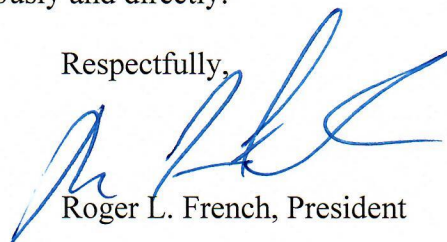
Dear Secretary Bernhardt:

I respectfully request that the Department of the Interior cease its approval of leases on behalf of the Colorado River Indian Reservation in the disputed area as defined by Public Law 88-302, 78 Stat. 188 (the Act of 1964). Within the ruling in *French v. Starr*, et al. ((D. Ariz., Feb. 12, 2015, No. CV-13-02153-PHX-JJT) 2015 WL 12592104, AFF'D (9<sup>TH</sup> Cir. 2017) 691 Fed Appx. 885) that "no court has finally determined the western boundary of the Reservation", and "the Court recognizes that the issue of the location of the Reservation's boundary remains unresolved", it is undeniable that the Act of 1964 prohibits the Secretary of the Interior from having authority to approve leases in the disputed area. For decades, the Dept. of Interior has sidestepped this statute, claiming that a 1969 Secretarial Order resolved the boundary dispute. But the *French v. Starr* court rejected that very claim presented by the United States in their amicus briefs and instead nullified any validity of the 1969 Secretarial Order, making it moot.

It is indeed time and fitting for the Department of Interior to finally recognize the law within the Act of 1964, the desire by Congress to protect the property rights of the residents in the disputed area, and begin acting in accordance with the law of the land. For too long, the residents including myself have suffered dearly under tribal jurisdiction and I hope you can clearly see that the Secretary's practice of approving leases within the disputed area should be halted immediately and all existing leases cancelled per concurrence with federal law.

I hereby make this request on behalf of all West Bank members and residents of the disputed area. I implore you to take this matter seriously and directly.

Respectfully,



Roger L. French, President

cc: Governor Gavin Newsom c/o Joe Dhillon  
Senator Dianne Feinstein c/o Emily Condon