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[Legislator]

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[Address]

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Dear \_\_\_\_\_ :

I am writing to ask your support in designating as a National Historic Landmark, the Sierra Summit Tunnels Site, which includes: the Railroad Summit Tunnels, the camp and work sites, the China Wall and the original rail bed at the summit of the Sierra Nevada mountains near Truckee. These sites are vital historic and engineering achievements, marking the significant effort of Chinese laborers in the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad, completed in 1869.

Integral to the history of these sites were approximately 12,000 Chinese workers who were the primary labor force for building the Transcontinental Railroad across the Sierra Nevada mountains. They were largely responsible for building nearly 700 miles of railroad bed and 15 tunnels under extremely harsh and dangerous conditions, with the loss of about 2,000 Chinese lives. Using hand tools and carts, black powder and volatile nitroglycerin, crews persisted despite racism and severe weather. Through their ingenuity, resilience and determination, much of the railroad that they built remains today. When the Summit Tunnel area was de-tracked in 1993, visitors were able to appreciate the scope of the work in one of the most beautiful places in the nation.

The Summit Tunnels Site is part of Tahoe National Forest and is nominated for designation as a National Historic Landmark. However, the tunnels and surrounding areas still suffer from severe tagging and vandalism, which undermines their educational and historic value and disrespects the lives lost in building the railroad. A National Historic Landmark designation along with conservation initiatives would help safeguard this important part of our national history for future generations.

I urge your support to designate the Summit Tunnels Site as a National Historic Landmark. Thank you for your attention to this request and for recognizing the diverse, historic, social and economic contributions made by these Chinese railroad workers to the development, growth and prominence of our country.

Sincerely,

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Printed Name	Signature	Date
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Address	City	State	ZIP	Phone (Optional)
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