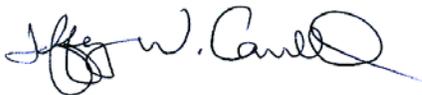
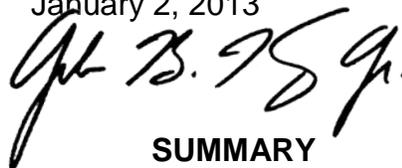




**TO:** Cultural Education Committee  
**FROM:** Jeffrey Cannell   
**SUBJECT:** Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) activities of the State Museum

**DATE:** January 2, 2013

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**

  
**SUMMARY**

### **Issue for Discussion**

On October 24, 2012, the State Museum received a formal claim under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) for the repatriation of eight wampum belts from the Museum's collection. The claim was submitted by Chief Roger Hill of the Tonawanda Seneca Nation. This claim is also supported by The Seneca Nation of Indians. The wampum belts will be returned based on the criteria specified in the NAGPRA law.

### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

Pursuant to a 1994 policy, the Board of Regents is informed of any repatriation decision made by the Director of the State Museum or the Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Cultural Education.

### **Procedural History**

In 1994, the Board of Regents assigned responsibility for decisions regarding the repatriation of NYSM collections to the Director of the Museum and the OCE Deputy. Since 1994, claims from tribes for objects are formally sent to the Director of the Museum. Once the Director of the Museum or the Deputy Commissioner decides to repatriate an object, formal notice is published in the Federal Register. The notice of intent to repatriate for the Seneca wampum belts has been published in the Federal Register, Vol. 77, No. 243, December 18, 2012.

## **Background Information**

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) is a federal law passed in 1990 to provide a mechanism for the return of specific types of cultural items to federally recognized Native American tribes including:

- Native American human remains and funerary objects.
- Sacred objects - items needed for the practice of traditional Native American religions.
- Objects of cultural patrimony – items with ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to a tribe that cannot be alienated, appropriated, or conveyed by any individual.