GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY

Executive Office of the Governor & Lieutenant Governor

"Gila River Strong"

Stephen Roe Lewis
Governor

Regina Antone
Lieutenant Governor

November 5, 2026

The Honorable Mark Kelly
United States Senate
516 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ruben Gallego
United States Senate
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Request to Vote NO on Cloture on the Motion to Proceed to S. 5653, the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act of 2026

Dear Senator Kelly and Senator Gallego:

On behalf of the Gila River Indian Community (the "Community"), I respectfully urge you to vote **NO** on the cloture vote scheduled for Monday, November 9, 2026, on the motion to proceed on the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act of 2026 (the "BAAJA"). The Community cannot support advancing BAAJA while it includes Title III, which effectively eliminates the protections for resources of cultural and religious significance to Tribes, which are a fundamental tenet of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Let me be clear: the Community shares the goal of a federal permitting system that works. As a government that operates its own utilities, roads, water infrastructure, and economic enterprises, the Community regularly navigates federal requirements and values an efficient, predictable process. At the same time, as a Tribal Nation that both relies on Section 106 and carries out Section 106 reviews ourselves, the Community knows that Congress can make permitting more efficient without sacrificing the protections Tribal Nations depend on to honor our history, practice our religious and cultural beliefs, and preserve our way of life. The Community stands ready to work with you to achieve reasonable reform. Unfortunately, the BAAJA was written and negotiated without any input from Tribal Nations and the inclusion of Title III is a clear attack on Tribal

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sovereignty and its inclusion harkens back to an era when Congress would regularly pass laws without any consideration for the impacts on Tribal culture, religion, and sovereignty.

I am asking you to vote NO because once cloture is invoked, the leverage to strike or meaningfully revise Title III is substantially diminished. A NO vote is not a vote against permitting reform; it is a vote to ensure that reform is done right and does not come at the expense of Tribal Nations and the sacred places that define who we are. We therefore urge you to vote NO on cloture, and to call on Senate leadership and the bill's sponsors to strike Title III before BAAJA moves forward.

Thank you for your continued partnership with the Community and for your steadfast support of Tribal sovereignty and Arizona's Tribal Nations.

Sincerely,

Stephen Roe Lewis, Governor
Gila River Indian Community