

# HELP PROTECT THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF IRAQ

## SUPPORT THE “IRAQ CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION ACT” (HR 2009)

Recent publicity regarding the recovery of numerous objects looted from the Baghdad Museum may have given the impression that a crisis no longer exists for the cultural heritage of Iraq. In fact, the widespread wholesale looting of the country’s archaeological sites represents an unimaginable and irrecoverable loss (see for example the October 2003 issue of *National Geographic*).

Co-sponsored by Congressmen Phil English and Jim Leach, HR 2009 imposes import restrictions on undocumented archaeological and cultural materials that were illegally removed from Iraq since August 1990, including manuscripts and religious materials. It also makes some important changes to the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (CCPIA), the law that implements the 1970 UNESCO Convention in the U.S., that will allow the President to act rapidly in future similar emergency situations. The bill is currently pending before the House Ways and Means Committee.

*A second bill addressing Iraqi antiquities, S.1291, has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Grassley but does not afford the level of protection encompassed by HR 2009.*

Please contact your Congressional Representative and urge him or her to support HR 2009. Tell your Senators that you do *not* support S.1291 and ask them to urge that a new bill tracking HR 2009 be introduced in the Senate.

For the text of HR 2009, its current cosponsors, and how to contact your Senators and Members of Congress, go to: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>.

**For further information, see the Archaeological Institute of America’s website:  
[www.archaeological.org](http://www.archaeological.org)**