

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Committee on Financial Services

From: FSC Majority Staff

Date: June 20, 2017

Subject: June 23, 2017, Terrorism and Illicit Finance Subcommittee Hearing Entitled “The Exploitation of Cultural Property: Examining Illicit Activity in the Antiquities and Art Trade”

The Terrorism and Illicit Finance Subcommittee will hold a hearing entitled “The Exploitation of Cultural Property: Examining Illicit Activity in the Antiquities and Art Trade” at 9:15 am on Friday, June 23, 2017, in Room 2128 of the Rayburn House Office Building. This will be a one-panel hearing with the following witnesses:

- Ms. Alyson Grunder, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State
- Dr. Brian Daniels, Research Associate, Smithsonian Institution
- Mr. Raymond Villanueva, Assistant Director for International Operations, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

The theft, fraud, looting, and trafficking of artifacts and cultural materials, including antiquities, is a longstanding transnational phenomenon that can enrich criminal actors and terrorists and destroy the cultural heritage of nations. It has been estimated that illicit art and cultural property crimes result in annual financial losses “in the billions of dollars.”¹ The Subcommittee will receive testimony from government experts concerning the scope of illicit activity in the art and antiquities trade, the ways in which recent instances of looting and destruction of cultural artifacts by terrorist groups like ISIS have been combatted, and how this looting and theft can be prevented in the future.

¹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Art Theft*, <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/violent-crime/art-theft>.