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Unratified Treaty at the Village of Temecula in California to Go On Display at the National Museum of the American Indian

Unratified California Treaty K, also known as the Treaty of Temecula, will go on display at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian on Sept. 22. This treaty is part of the exhibition “Nation to Nation: Treaties Between the United States and American Indian Nations,” which opened on Sept. 21, 2014 and will stay open through Spring 2020. The full text of the treaty is available on the Nation to Nation [project website](#).

The Treaty of Temecula is but one of 18 unratified treaties with California tribes that were submitted to the U.S. Senate on June 1, 1852 by President Millard Fillmore. Unbeknownst to the tribal signatories, the Senate rejected the treaties and ordered them to be held in secrecy for over fifty years. In the meantime, the tribes were left vulnerable to abuse and subjugation at the hands of white settlers and the policies of state lawmakers, leading to an ethnic cleansing in which the Indian population in California plunged from perhaps 150,000 to 30,000 between 1846 and 1870. “By displaying Treaty K, the museum recognizes not only the treaties that were broken, but also the power imbalance that existed to allow treaties to be dismissed and their memory to be locked away in secrecy,” said Kevin Gover, director of the museum.

Representatives from the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians, San Manuel Band of Missions Indians and Ramona Band of Cahuilla, four of the tribes affected by the treaty, will be present to witness the installation of the original document more than 150 years after it was rejected by the U.S. Senate. The document will be on loan from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) through January 2017, including the date of the treaty anniversary on Jan. 5.

For more details about the museum, visit AmericanIndian.si.edu. Follow the museum via social media on [Facebook](#), our Twitter accounts for [Washington](#) and [New York](#) and [Instagram](#).