Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
MEDIA RELEASE

Contact:
Office of Public Affairs
Michael Steele – Tribal Policy Analyst
Email: michael.steele@sbtribes.com
Cell: (208) 851-5400

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 13, 2026

The Fort Hall Business Council Urges Tribal Members and Community Supporters to Help Defend Against the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act

Fort Hall – The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Tribes) of the Fort Hall Reservation join other tribal nations and organizations by adamantly opposing S. 5653, the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act (BAAJA), and urge tribal members and community supporters to take immediate action by contacting Idaho's congressional delegation to insist that they *VOTE NO* on the bill.

Touted as "permitting reform," BAAJA does not address the many objections the Tribes raised via discussions and letters to U.S. Senate and key committee leadership and the U.S. Senate Democratic Caucus sent on October 28 and November 8, 2026. BAAJA ignores Congress' Trust and Treaty responsibilities granted through the U.S. Constitution, Supreme Court decisions, federal laws, Executive Orders and our Treaty, the Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868.

Introduced on September 30, 2026 without committee hearings and tribal consultation, the legislation would cause countless harms by rewriting and weakening how the United States consults with Tribal Nations. It would also make it more difficult to protect our sacred places, our water and other natural resources. It also limits access to the judicial system when federal agencies fail to uphold their Trust and Treaty responsibilities. The senate's next vote on the bill is on November 16.

This rushed legislation does not just have Tribal impacts. This legislation is another planned attack on our public lands led by Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah). Idahoans should be alarmed that BAAJA will pave the way for the destruction of public lands by fast-tracking permitting for data centers, allowing mining companies to claim "mill sites" to dump their toxic waste, reducing endangered species protections, and weakening the State's ability to protect the water. It even opens the door to resurrect and rush approvals for the Lava Ridge Wind Project.

"Our Treaty Rights, our sovereignty, and our homelands are at stake," said Fort Hall Business Council Chairwoman Donna Thompson. "The Fort Hall Business Council urges tribal members and the surrounding community to contact Idaho's congressional delegation and demand that they oppose BAAJA because it violates Tribal sovereignty and would irreparably harm the environment. Tell them to *Vote No* on BAAJA and work with all stakeholders to develop a permitting reform bill that will not cause permanent harms."

Senator Mike Crapo at https://www.crapo.senate.gov/contact/email-me
Senator Jim Risch at https://www.risch.senate.gov/contact/share-your-opinion/
Representative Mike Simpson at https://simpson.house.gov/contact/