

NATIONAL
SPELEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY, INC.



6001 Pulaski Pike

Huntsville, AL 35810-1122

DEDICATED TO THE EXPLORATION, STUDY, AND CONSERVATION OF CAVES

Homero de Giorge Cerqueira
Presidente do Instituto Chico Mendes de Biodiversidade
(President of Chico Mendes Biodiversity Institute)
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Dear Presidente:

On behalf of the National Speleological Society (NSS) of the United States of America, we express our full support of the Brazilian Speleology Society Commission that is evaluating the proposed changes in Brazil's cave protection legislation. Brazil currently recognizes and protects its unique natural and cultural heritage and is the world leader with the best spelean-protection legislation and policies. We sincerely encourage and support maintenance of Brazil's current speleological legislation.

With thousands of members and 250 Grottos (chapters), the National Speleological Society is the largest organization in the world working every day to further the exploration, study, protection, and conservation of caves and karst. Members of the NSS work hand-in-hand with federal agencies of the United States of America under cooperative agreements and Memorandums Of Understanding. The NSS supports balanced approaches to cave access and resource protection with actions that are backed by scientific data and conservation protocols. Many cavers and scientists from the United States travel to Brazil to admire its cave and karst resources.

Brazil is currently the world leader in protection of its caves and karst through legislative process. Failure to protect caves and karst by reducing legislation and regulations would cause extensive loss of Brazil's natural and cultural heritage.

The continued protection of Brazil's most relevant caves and karst areas is essential to ensure the preservation of fragile biological life in underground ecosystems, cultural information that is naturally archived in cave environments, underground waterways and springs that are important for natural systems and human consumption, as well as many other impressive spelean-heritage resources for all Brazilians. Please maintain Brazil's legislation that assures continuing protection policies for the resources of Brazil's heritage that are harbored only in your speleological environments.

Respectfully submitted,

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