

Parthenon Sculptures (Return to Greece) Bill

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TO

Make provision for the transfer of ownership and return to Greece of the artefacts known as the Parthenon Sculptures, or Elgin Marbles, purchased by Parliament in 1816; to amend the British Museum Act 1963 accordingly; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Return of the Parthenon Sculptures

- (1) Ownership of the collection of artefacts known as the 'Parthenon Sculptures', or the 'Elgin Marbles', is transferred to the Government of the Hellenic Republic, subject only to subsections (2) and (4).
- (2) The artefacts comprising the collection in subsection (1) shall be determined by the Secretary of State by regulation. 5
- (3) Before making a determination under subsection (2), the Secretary of State must consult—
 - (a) the Trustees of the British Museum,
 - (b) representatives of the Government of the Hellenic Republic, and 10
 - (c) any other person, body or institution that the Secretary of State believes to be appropriate.
- (4) Subsection (1) has effect on the coming into force of an agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the Hellenic Republic in which terms are agreed relating to— 15
 - (a) arrangements for the suitable transportation of the collection determined under subsection (2);
 - (b) responsibility for the costs of such transportation;
 - (c) arrangements and conditions for the maintenance and display of the collection; and 20
 - (d) access to the collection for—
 - (i) experts,
 - (ii) students, and

- (iii) members of the public.
- (5) The power to—
- (a) make regulations under subsection (2), or
 - (b) enter into an agreement under subsection (4)
- is exercisable by statutory instrument which may only be made after a draft of the instrument has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament. 5
- 2 Amendment of the British Museum Act 1963**
- (1) In section 5 of the British Museum Act 1963 (disposal of objects), after subsection (4) insert— 10
- “(5) Nothing in this section may be interpreted as applying to an artefact that—
- (a) has been determined to be part of the collection under section 1(1) of the Parthenon Sculptures (Return to Greece) Act 2016, or
 - (b) is under active consideration by the Secretary of State for determination as to whether or not the artefact is part of that collection.” 15
- (2) In section 9 of the British Museum Act 1963 (transfers to other institutions) after subsection (1) insert—
- “(2) Nothing in this section may be interpreted as applying to an artefact that— 20
- (a) has been determined to be part of the collection under section 1(1) of the Parthenon Sculptures (Return to Greece) Act 2016, or
 - (b) is under active consideration by the Secretary of State for determination as to whether or not the artefact is part of that collection.” 25
- 3 Other artefacts**
- Nothing in this Act shall be interpreted as applying to any artefact forming part of a collection within a national museum or gallery other than the artefacts mention in section 1. 30
- 4 Short title and commencement**
- (1) This Act may be cited as the Parthenon Sculptures (Return to Greece) Act 2016.
- (2) This Act comes into force on the day after the day on which it receives Royal Assent.

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*Presented by Mr Mark Williams
supported by
Sir Roger Gale, Margaret Ferrier,
Jeremy Lefroy, Mary Glendon, Hywel Williams
and Liz Saville Roberts.*

*Ordered, by The House of Commons,
to be Printed, 11 July 2016.*

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