

-Legislative Hearing-

OPENING STATEMENT

December 4, 2019

Thank you, Chairman Gallego.

As you mentioned, the subcommittee will be receiving testimony today on H.R. 1964, the Lumbee Recognition Act.

This bill would extend federal recognition to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina by amending Act of June 7, 1956—commonly known as the Lumbee Act—to remove a statutory bar on the group’s eligibility for services available to Indians because of their status as Indians.

If enacted, H.R. 3650 would recognize one of the largest tribes in the country by enrollment, and extend the same powers, privileges, immunities, and eligibility for federal services accorded to any other federally recognized tribe.

Similar legislation has been introduced for many years, and at times it has been considered in this Committee and in the full House.

However, we in Congress do not seem to have clear standards for determining when a tribe should be federally recognized.

But we do have a bill before us today that is politicizing the process.

I look forward to having a good conversation today on these points and why congressional legislation is needed.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here today and I look forward to their testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.