

Opening Statement

- Madam Chair, thank you for calling this legislative hearing to order.
- Today's hearing will focus on five bills:
 - H.R. 441, sponsored by myself, to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Tanana Tribal Council located in Tanana, Alaska;
 - H.R. 2402, sponsored by Representative Fortenberry, the Winnebago Land Transfer Act;
 - H.R. 4881, sponsored by Representative Grijalva, the Old Pascua Community Land Acquisition Act;
 - H.R. 5221, sponsored by Representative Grijalva, the Urban Indian Health Confer Act; and
 - And H. J. Res. 55, sponsored by Representative **Kahele**, the Prince **Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole** Protecting Family Legacies Act.
- First, I want to welcome the Honorable **Julie Roberts-Hyslop**, Second Chief of the Native Village of Tanana.
- Thank you for being here and your service to your people.
- My bill, H.R. 441, would authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to convey 11.25 acres of land in Tanana, Alaska, to the Tanana Tribal Council—which is the governing body of the Native Village of Tanana.
- The conveyance would be made by a warranty deed, which is a type of deed that guarantees a clear title to the new owner of the property.
- In 1995, the Tanana Tribal Council assumed responsibility for health care services from the Indian Health Service, under the authority of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.
- The parcel of land that the tribe is requesting encompasses a portion of a former Indian Health Service hospital site.
- The Tanana Tribal Council intends to use the land for a future health clinic, family wellness center, and an after care treatment center, and possibly expanding other elder care services.

- I'm also a proud cosponsor of two of the other bills we have before us today, House Joint Resolution 55, sponsored by Rep. Kahele, and H.R. 5221, sponsored by Chairman Grijalva.
- H. J. Res. 55 would give Congress's assent to lower the requirements of native Hawaiian blood quantum, under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act.
- In 2017, the State of Hawaii passed Act 80 and it would amend the native Hawaiian blood quantum requirements for successorship qualification of a lessee's spouse, brother, sister, child or grandchild from one-quarter to one thirty-second.
- Congress must approve these measures for the native Hawaiian blood quantum requirements to be changed.
- Congress most recently consented to the changes to the blood quantum requirements in 1997.
- H.R. 5221 would require Health and Human Services to participate in the Urban Confer process with Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs).
- Currently only the Indian Health Service has a legal obligation to confer with UIOs.
- Recent issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccine distribution may have been prevented if HHS was required to confer with Urban Indian Organizations.
- This bill would help to ensure that UIOs are heard regarding Native health care.
- The other two bills would affect Indian economic development and returning original land to an Indian tribe, both issues I've supported for many tribes over many years.
- Madame Chairwoman, I support these bills and look forward to testimony from the witnesses.
- I yield back.