



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN BRUCE WESTERMAN

To: Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs Republican Members
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Date: Monday, November 17, 2025
Subject: Legislative Hearing on 4 Bills

The Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs will hold a legislative hearing on four bills: H.R. 4276 (Rep. Case), To amend the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act to authorize grants to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations, and for other purposes; H.R. 5515 (Rep. Hurd), “*Indian Trust Asset Reform Amendment Act*”; H.R. 5682 (Rep. Issa), To take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Pechanga Band of Indians, and for other purposes; and H.R. 5696 (Rep. LaMalfa), “*Strengthening Tribal Real Estate Authority and Modernizing Land for Indigenous Nation Expansion Act*”, or the “*STREAMLINE ACT*”.

The hearing will take place on **Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 10:15 a.m. in 1334 Longworth House Office Building.**

Member offices are requested to notify Haig Kadian (Haig.Kadian@mail.house.gov) by 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, if their Member intends to participate in the hearing.

I. KEY MESSAGES

- The three bills introduced by House Republicans reaffirm the federal government’s trust responsibility to tribal nations, increase the restoration of tribal homelands, and support tribal sovereignty.
- H.R. 5515 makes permanent the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act’s (ITARA) 10-year demonstration program and addresses implementation challenges identified by tribes and the Department of the Interior (DOI).
- H.R. 5682 places approximately 1,261 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-managed land into trust for the Pechanga Band of Indians.
- H.R. 5696, the “*STREAMLINE ACT*”, empowers tribes to advance needed land and economic development projects by enabling those with self-governance realty programs to conduct their own land appraisals.

II. WITNESSES

Panel I (Members of Congress)

- *To Be Announced*

Panel II (Outside Experts)

- **Mr. Tim Vredenburg**, Director of Forest Management, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, Roseburg, OR [*H.R. 5515*]
- **The Hon. Marc Luker**, Councilman, Pechanga Band of Indians, Temecula, CA [*H.R. 5682*]
- **The Hon. Wena Supernaw**, Chair, Quapaw Nation, Quapaw, OK [*H.R. 5696*]

III. BACKGROUND

[H.R. 4276 \(Rep. Case\), To amend the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act to authorize grants to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations, and for other purposes.](#)

H.R. 4276, introduced by Rep. Ed Case (D-HI-01), would amend the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act¹ to authorize the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations (ONHR) to issue grants in support of tribal and Native Hawaiian tourism initiatives.

In 2016, Congress passed the NATIVE Act to promote tourism in Native communities by expanding opportunities for visitors to experience Native history, culture, and language.² Although some of the NATIVE Act's proponents envisioned that federal support would take the form of grants, loans, and technical assistance (TA) to tribal nations, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations, the statute did not explicitly authorize BIA and ONHR to issue the grants. This omission has led to implementation challenges. H.R. 4276 would address this issue by specifically authorizing both agencies to issue such grants and enter into agreements with tribal nations, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations.³

While the bill clarifies existing authority and aims to improve implementation of the NATIVE Act, it raises significant fiscal concerns. The authorization of \$35 million over the period from fiscal year (FY) 2025 to FY 2029 without an offset does not comply with the "Cut-Go" requirement under the 119th Congress's House Floor Protocols.⁴

¹ P.L. 114-221.

² S. Rept. 114-201, <https://www.congress.gov/committee-report/114th-congress/senate-report/201/1>.

³ S. Rept. 119-20, <https://www.congress.gov/committee-report/119th-congress/senate-report/20/1>.

⁴ "119th Congress Floor Protocols," The Office of Congressman Steve Scalise, <https://www.majorityleader.gov/schedule/floor-protocols.htm>.

H.R. 5515 (Rep. Hurd), “Indian Trust Asset Reform Amendment Act”

The U.S. holds a federal trust responsibility towards American Indians and Alaska Natives.⁵ Through this trust responsibility, the U.S. is obliged to steward lands and other trust assets for tribes, including through the management of tribal trust lands.⁶ While the federal government’s approach to this responsibility has changed throughout history, federal policy since the 1970s has emphasized tribal self-determination.⁷

In 2016, Congress enacted the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (ITARA)⁸ to reaffirm the federal trust responsibility towards tribal nations, while also encouraging self-determination through tribal management of trust assets.⁹ ITARA included a provision establishing a demonstration program that enabled tribes to manage their own trust assets by creating an Indian Trust Asset Management Plan (ITAMP).¹⁰ The ITARA Demonstration Program (demonstration program) authorized the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to enter into ITAMPs with tribes that met specific requirements. To participate, a tribe had to apply, obtain Secretarial approval, and submit an ITAMP that satisfied the statutory and regulatory requirements.¹¹

ITARA was intended to allow tribes to enter into ITAMPs covering a wide range of trust assets. An oversight hearing held on February 25, 2025, by the House Natural Resources Committee’s Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs, however, revealed that tribes still face obstacles to fully managing their trust assets.¹² Notably, DOI’s narrow interpretation of the statute limits tribes’ ability to fully utilize ITARA.¹³ Beyond frustrations with DOI’s narrow application, tribes expressed concerns with the bureaucratic ITAMP approval process, the lack of awareness about ITARA’s opportunities, and the limited engagement and participation by BIA career staff.¹⁴

⁵ Nicole T. Carter, et al., “Federal-Tribal Consultation: Background and Issues for Congress,” Congressional Research Service, June 12, 2024, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R48093>.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ “Special Message on Indian Affairs,” President Richard Nixon, July 8, 1970, <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2013-08/documents/president-nixon70.pdf>. For more information on tribal self-determination policies, see “Advancing Tribal Self-Determination: Examining Bureau of Indian Affairs’ 638 Contracting,” Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs, House Committee on Natural Resources, 119th Congress, March 6, 2024, <https://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=415607>.

⁸ P.L. 114-178.

⁹ H. Rept. 114-432, <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/114th-congress/house-report/432/1>.

¹⁰ P.L. 114-178, see Title II.

¹¹ “Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (ITARA),” U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, <https://www.bia.gov/service/itara>.

¹² “Federal Indian Trust Asset Management: Progress Made But Improvement Needed” Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs House Committee on Natural Resources, 119th Congress, February 25, 2025, <https://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=416931>.

¹³ U.S. Department of Interior’s “Response to Tribal Comments on Establishment of the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act Demonstration Project,” 2018, on file with IIA Staff. “Federal Indian Trust Asset Management: Progress Made But Improvement Needed” Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs, House Committee on Natural Resources, 119th Congress, February 25, 2025, <https://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=416931>.

¹⁴ Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation comments on the Department of the Interior’s implementation of Title II of the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act, March 2018, on file with IIA Staff. “Federal Indian Trust Asset Management: Progress Made But Improvement Needed” Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs, House Committee on Natural Resources, 119th Congress, February 25, 2025, <https://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=416931>.

Following the oversight hearing,¹⁵ tribal nations, stakeholders, and congressional staff collaborated to develop H.R. 5515. Sponsored by Rep. Jeff Hurd (R-CO-03), this legislation amends ITARA to make the demonstration program permanent, removes the application process that has allowed DOI to restrict tribal participation arbitrarily, and defines “trust assets” to ensure that ITARA is implemented as originally intended. The bill also makes tribal organizations eligible to enter ITAMPs. It authorizes tribes operating under approved ITAMPs to approve or amend forest management plans without federal approval under the National Indian Resources Management Act.

H.R. 5682 (Rep. Issa), To take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Pechanga Band of Indians, and for other purposes.

The Pechanga Band of Indians (Pechanga) is a federally recognized tribe located near Temecula, California.¹⁶ The tribe’s 7,403-acre reservation represents a small portion of its ancestral territory, which historically extended across much of southern California.¹⁷

Pu’éska Mountain is central to the Pechanga’s creation stories and spiritual life.¹⁸ In the early 2000s, the area was proposed as the site of the Liberty Quarry.¹⁹ The tribe purchased Pu’éska Mountain in 2012 and placed it into trust in 2015. The quarry was not developed.²⁰

The remaining 1,261 acres of BLM-managed land on the mountain are interspersed with the Pechanga’s existing holdings. This disarray has caused management and access challenges.²¹ The tribe seeks to consolidate ownership to ensure unified stewardship of its sacred lands.

Introduced by Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA-48), H.R. 5682 places approximately 1,261 acres of BLM-managed land into trust to consolidate the Pechanga’s sacred sites under unified management. The land must remain open space, used only for cultural and conservation purposes. It cannot be used for gaming. These restrictions, along with the requirement to maintain the existing memorandum of understanding (MOU) governing ecological protections, ensure that the transfer will have minimal environmental impact, while preserving valid existing rights and local coordination.

¹⁵ “Federal Indian Trust Asset Management: Progress Made But Improvement Needed” Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs, House Committee on Natural Resources, 119th Congress, February 25, 2025. <https://naturalresources.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=416931>.

¹⁶ Tiller, Veronica E. Velarde. “Tiller’s Guide to Indian Country: Economic Profiles of American Indian Reservations”, 3rd ed. Pg. 321.

¹⁷ “Proposed Land Transfer from the Bureau of Land Management to the Pechanga Band of Indians”, September 15, 2025.

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ *Id.*

H.R. 5696 (Rep. LaMalfa), “Strengthening Tribal Real Estate Authority and Modernizing Land for Indigenous Nation Expansion Act”, or “STREAMLINE ACT”

H.R. 5696, sponsored by Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-CA-01), would accelerate tribal land acquisitions by allowing tribes with self-governance realty compacts to perform and certify their own appraisals for on-reservation or contiguous trust land purchases. The bill directs DOI to revise Part 151 of Title 25 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), DOI’s land-into-trust regulations (Part 151 regulations). Specifically, the Secretary must accept a Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP)-compliant tribal appraisal in lieu of a federal appraisal if the tribe operates under a Title I or Title IV Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA)²² compact or contract that includes realty functions. The legislation also amends the Indian Land Consolidation Act (ILCA)²³ to apply the same rule to land consolidation transactions and requires DOI to publish comparative processing data and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to evaluate the results after three years.

Under existing regulations, DOI must determine or verify fair market value before approving most transactions involving Indian trust or restricted lands. DOI’s regulations for leases, rights-of-ways, and land acquisitions require that any appraisal or valuation used in a trust-land deal adhere to professional standards. For example, 25 C.F.R. § 169.114, concerning rights-of-way, provides that BIA “will use or approve use of a market analysis, appraisal, or other appropriate valuation method ... only if it has been prepared in accordance with USPAP or a valuation method developed by the Secretary.”²⁴ Likewise, 25 C.F.R. § 162.422, concerning business leases, allows BIA to use an appraisal from a lessee or Indian landowner if the appraisal “has been prepared in accordance with USPAP” and “complies with [DOI] policies regarding appraisals, including third-party appraisals.”²⁵ These provisions confirm that BIA already has the authority to use or approve third-party or tribal appraisals that meet USPAP and DOI standards. In practice, however, DOI’s internal process still requires a federal review of most appraisals used for Indian trust transactions.

Within DOI, the Appraisal & Valuation Services Office (AVSO) is responsible for reviewing and approving valuations for both federal lands and Indian trust lands.²⁶ AVSO operates through regional offices aligned with the 12 BIA regions, with a supervisory appraiser in each region who supports BIA and tribal realty programs, including conducting appraisal reviews.²⁷

ITARA created a limited waiver process that allows DOI to accept qualified appraisals without conducting its own review under 43 C.F.R. § 100. A tribal or third-party appraisal can bypass AVSO review only if (1) the tribe or owner formally requests a waiver of DOI review when submitting the appraisal, (2) the appraisal was completed by a qualified appraiser who meets the minimum qualifications defined in the regulations, and (3) no interested party objects to using

²² P.L. 93-638.

²³ P.L. 97-459.

²⁴ 25 C.F.R. § 169.114.

²⁵ 25 C.F.R. § 162.422.

²⁶ “AVSO Overview”, U.S. Department of the Interior, <https://www.doi.gov/valuationservices/overview>.

²⁷ “Indian Trust Property Valuation Division”, U.S. Department of the Interior, <https://www.doi.gov/valuationservices/indian-trust-property-valuation-division>.

the appraisal without DOI review.²⁸ If these conditions are met, DOI will accept the appraisal as final without an AVSO review.²⁹ The regulation explicitly states that if “a waiver is not specifically requested ... [DOI] will review the appraisal or valuation report even if the appraiser ... meets minimum qualifications.”³⁰ As a result, federal review remains the default unless a waiver is invoked and approved.

Tribes that have compacted realty programs already interact with AVSO under this system. There are dozens of tribal self-governance programs that provide or contract for their own appraisals.³¹ However, unless a tribe successfully waives DOI review, as provided by 43 C.F.R. § 100, any appraisal it submits (even one it prepared itself) remains subject to AVSO’s oversight by default.

A 2024 GAO report found that BIA’s multi-layered process for reviewing and approving real estate transactions is “rigorous and often time-intensive.”³² Transactions involving trust or restricted Indian lands take far longer than similar private or state transactions. GAO reported that tribal stakeholders believe BIA’s lengthy internal reviews, approval layers, and poor communication slow real-estate services, delay projects, and discourage investment.³³ GAO further found that BIA does not reliably track processing times, lacks key performance metrics, and cannot readily identify bottlenecks.³⁴ To solve this, GAO recommended that BIA adopt improved data tracking for many categories of transactions to pinpoint the exact sources of delay.³⁵ GAO also recommended that BIA take steps to streamline its realty services.³⁶

H.R. 5696 directly addresses these appraisal process inefficiencies. The legislation removes the requirement for a federal review when a qualified self-governance tribe has already produced a USPAP-compliant appraisal. Within one year of enactment, DOI is required to revise its Part 151 regulations to provide that such appraisals are deemed accepted and satisfy the Secretary’s fiduciary duty. The bill limits DOI’s role to ministerial confirmation and recordation of receipt. It also requires DOI to update internal manuals, including the Fee-to-Trust Handbook³⁷ and AVSO guidance, to align with the new standard.

H.R. 5696 also amends ILCA to ensure that the same acceptance rule applies to trust and restricted land conveyances under section 219.³⁸ To enhance accountability, the bill directs DOI to publish comparative data on average processing times for transactions using tribal versus

²⁸ “AVSO Appraisal and Valuation Services Office Indian Trust Property Valuation Division”, U.S. Department of the Interior, pg. 6, <https://www.tribalsegov.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/OST-Supplemental-Information.pdf>.

²⁹ *Id.*

³⁰ 43 C.F.R. § 100.301(a)(1).

³¹ “Appraisal and Valuation Services Office” Self-Governance Communication and Education Tribal Consortium, pg. 6, <https://www.tribalsegov.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/AVSO-Appraisal-Program.pdf>.

³² “TRIBAL ISSUES - Bureau of Indian Affairs Should Take Additional Steps to Improve Timely Delivery of Real Estate Services”, U.S. Government Accountability Office, November 6, 2023, pg. 47, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-24-105875.pdf>.

³³ *Id.*, pg. 2.

³⁴ *Id.*, pg. 39.

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ *Id.*, pgs. 48-49.

³⁷ “Indian Affairs Fee-To-Trust Acquisitions And Reservation Proclamations Handbook (52 IAM 12-H)”, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/assets/public/raca/handbook/pdf/52-iam-12-h_ftt-handbook_final_signed_1.15.25_508.pdf.

³⁸ 25 U.S.C. § 2218.

federal appraisals and instructs GAO to evaluate implementation after three years. The bill expressly preserves the applicability of environmental review, title evidence, and notice requirements under existing law.

IV. MAJOR PROVISIONS & SECTION-BY-SECTION

H.R. 4276 (Rep. Case), To amend the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act to authorize grants to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations, and for other purposes.

Section 1. Native American Tourism Grant Programs.

- Amends the NATIVE Act to explicitly provide BIA and ONHR with the ability to authorize grants to tribal nations, tribal organizations, and Native Alaskan and Native Hawaiian organizations for tourism purposes.
- Provides clarity that other heads of agencies, such as the Secretaries of Commerce and Transportation, may also enter into agreements with tribal nations, tribal organizations, and Native Alaskan and Native Hawaiian organizations for tourism purposes.
- Authorizes \$35 million to implement the grant program for FY 2025 through FY 2029.

H.R. 5515 (Rep. Hurd), “Indian Trust Asset Reform Amendment Act”

Section 2. Amendments to Indian Trust Asset Reform Act.

- Defines the term “trust assets” as comprising the following:
 - “trust lands, natural resources, trust funds, or other assets held by the Federal Government in trust for Indian tribes and individual Indians;” or
 - “any resource that is, or has previously been, included in an integrated resources management plan or other management plan approved by the Secretary.”
- Allows tribally authorized organizations to enter into ITAMPs
- Makes the demonstration program permanent.
- Removes the application process that DOI utilized to stall tribes from entering into ITAMPS.
- Allows tribes to use ITAMPs to approve or amend forest plans without federal approval under the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act.

H.R. 5682 (Rep. Issa), To take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Pechanga Band of Indians, and for other purposes.

Section 2. Transfer of Land into Trust for the Pechanga Band of Indians.

- Directs the Secretary to take into trust for the benefit of the Pechanga Band of Indians the approximately 1,261 acres of BLM-administered land in Riverside County, California, described in the designated map.
- Requires the trust land to be administered pursuant to an existing MOU governing ecological protections.
- Requires the land to be maintained as open space and used only for cultural and conservation purposes. Prohibits the land from being used for gaming.

H.R. 5696 (Rep. LaMalfa), “Strengthening Tribal Real Estate Authority and Modernizing Land for Indigenous Nation Expansion Act”, or “STREAMLINE ACT”

Section 2. Regulatory Revision to Part 151 of Title 25, Code of Federal Regulations

- Directs the Secretary to revise land-into-trust regulations to require acceptance of qualified tribal appraisals in lieu of federal appraisals for on-reservation or contiguous acquisitions by self-governance tribes.
- Defines “tribal appraisal” to include appraisals conducted under ISDEAA Title I or Title IV compacts consistent with USPAP standards.
- Deems acceptance of a qualifying tribal appraisal to satisfy the Secretary’s fiduciary and trust duties.

Section 3. Amendment to the Indian Land Consolidation Act.

- Amends 25 U.S.C. § 2218 to prohibit DOI from requiring its own appraisal when a self-governance tribe conducts a USPAP-compliant valuation for on-reservation or contiguous land transactions.
- Requires the Secretary to accept such tribal appraisals as sufficient to establish fair market value.

Section 4. Transparency and Evaluation.

- Requires DOI to publish comparative data on processing times for tribal and federal appraisals and directs GAO to evaluate implementation within three years.
- Clarifies that the Act does not alter NEPA compliance, title review, or notice requirements under existing law.

V. COST

H.R. 4276 is identical to S. 612, which the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimated](#) would cost \$35 million over the period from FY 2025 - FY 2030.³⁹ A formal cost estimate from CBO is not yet available for the remaining three bills.

VI. ADMINISTRATION POSITION

The Trump administration’s position on these bills is unknown at this time.

VII. EFFECT ON CURRENT LAW

[H.R. 4276](#)

[H.R. 5515](#)

[H.R. 5696](#)

³⁹ “Cost Estimate. S. 612, a bill to amend the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act to authorize grants to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations, and for other purposes.”, Congressional Budget Office, March 27, 2025, <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/61269>.