

Statement for the Record
U.S. Department of the Interior
House Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs
Legislative Hearing
On
H.R. 7269, Helping Our People Act of 2026
H.R. 8674, Geese House Site Conveyance Act

September 17, 2026

The Department of the Interior appreciates the opportunity to provide this Statement for the Record on H.R. 7269, Helping Our People Act of 2026, and H.R. 8674, Geese House Site Conveyance Act.

H.R. 7269, Helping Our People Act of 2026

H.R. 7269 would amend the Puyallup Tribe of Indians Settlement Act of 1989 to provide the Puyallup Tribe of Indians greater authority over funds held in trust pursuant to the 1989 settlement and to clarify the application of subsequently enacted Federal laws to the Tribe.

The legislation would authorize the Tribe to withdraw settlement funds in accordance with the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994 and pursuant to a management plan approved by the Secretary. It would also add a savings provision clarifying that the settlement does not prevent the United States from treating the Puyallup Tribe in the same manner as other federally recognized Indian Tribes under Federal laws enacted after the settlement.

The Department supports H.R. 7269. These amendments would modernize the statutory framework governing the Tribe's settlement trust funds, provide greater flexibility for the Tribe to manage those funds, and provide greater clarity regarding the application of subsequently enacted Federal laws to the Puyallup Tribe.

H.R. 8674, Geese House Site Conveyance Act

H.R. 8674, the Geese House Site Conveyance Act, directs the Secretary to convey roughly 21,578 acres within the Denali National Park and Preserve area to Doyon, Limited. Doyon is an Alaska Native regional corporation established under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). The bill identifies the surveyed lands to be transferred to Doyon while excluding certain lots and lakebed areas. It also requires the Secretary to reserve public easements under section 17(b) of ANCSA, which mandates the retention of access routes across conveyed Native corporation lands for public travel and subsistence use. The legislation prohibits Doyon from

transferring the land to non-federal entities, authorizing mineral development, or allowing uses that would undermine the cultural significance of the Geese House site. The bill also directs the Department to adjust the Denali National Park and Preserve boundary to reflect the conveyance. Finally, the legislation exempts the conveyance from the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act land-conveyance regulations in 43 C.F.R. part 2650, which normally govern how ANCSA land selections are processed, as well as from any past or existing land withdrawals, and authorizes the Secretary to make minor corrections to the land survey and legal description with Doyon's approval.

The Department supports H.R. 8674. The Geese House site represents a culturally significant and ancestral place of deep importance to the Athabascan people. Doyon, Limited, has long sought this land transfer to fulfill critical protection and stewardship responsibilities for the site. This bill advances that goal, by providing a clear legal framework for the conveyance and safeguarding its cultural values through prohibitions on incompatible development and protections aligned with ANCSA. It also appropriately aligns the Denali National Park and Preserve boundary with longstanding land selections made by Doyon more than four decades ago.