

-Legislative Hearing-

**OPENING STATEMENT**

October 16, 2019

Thank you, Chairman Gallego.

As you mentioned, the subcommittee will be receiving testimony today on two pieces of legislation.

The first bill, H.R. 3160, the Blackwater Trading Post Land Transfer Act, would place approximately 55 acres of land in Pinal County, Arizona into trust for the Gila River Indian Community.

According to the Tribe, these lands and the former trading post have a historical connection to the tribe, as the trading post served many tribal members since at least the 1930's.

Pursuant to the 2004 Arizona Water Rights Settlement Act, the Gila River Tribe cannot acquire off-reservation lands into trust absent an Act of Congress.

The second bill, S. 46, would repeal the 1965 Klamath Judgement Fund Act and direct the Secretary of the Interior to transfer the remaining \$600,000 in the fund to the Tribe.

The Klamath Judgement fund was initially created to collect judgement awards for Indian Claims Commission judgements awarded in the 1960's and 1970's to the Tribe and its members.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that there are approximately 200 individuals or their heirs who were on the final 1954 Klamath membership rolls that the Department of the Interior has been unable to locate, who are eligible for the remaining Klamath judgement fund monies.

This bill would direct the remaining judgement funds to the Klamath Tribe.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here today and I am looking forward to hearing their testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.