

Dear USET SPF Membership,

Please be advised that Congresswoman Haaland's confirmation hearing at the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources has been extended an additional day. Continuing coverage begins now (scheduled for 10 am ET/9 am CT) on the Committee's [website](#).



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USET SPF Alert

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Schedules Confirmation Hearing for Biden Secretary of the Interior Nominee, Congresswoman Deb Haaland

Dear USET SPF Membership,

The U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources has [scheduled a hearing](#) to consider President Biden's nomination of Congresswoman Deb Haaland to become Secretary of the Interior. The hearing will take place on Tuesday, February 23rd, at 9:30 am ET and will be broadcast live on the Committee's [website](#). The Committee will later vote on whether to favorably report her nomination to the full Senate for consideration.

Congresswoman Haaland is a citizen of the Pueblo of Laguna and, if confirmed, will be the first Native American person to lead the U.S. Department of the Interior and the first to hold a Cabinet-level position. The Department of the Interior is charged with the execution of critical parts of the trust obligation to Tribal Nations, historic preservation, and the management of a majority of federal lands. Each of its agencies has responsibilities to our governments and our people, and Congresswoman Haaland will provide critical leadership and insight to improve the Department's operations and obligations to Indian Country.

USET SPF has consistently celebrated and articulated its unqualified support for Congresswoman Haaland's nomination, issuing a [statement](#) when President Biden

nominated her in December 2020, as well as a [letter of support](#) to the Committee in January. In addition, we drafted and coordinated a [joint Tribal organization letter](#) to the Committee earlier this month.

Over the years, USET SPF has had the distinct pleasure of working with Congresswoman Haaland on several issues of critical importance to Indian Country. As a Native American woman, she carries an innate knowledge of our history and challenges, and she is passionate about formulating solutions to right historic wrongs. As an advocate for Indian Country, Congresswoman Haaland has proven time and again that she is dedicated to improving the livelihood of Native American people and she will bring that same dedication to a department with critical trust obligations to Tribal Nations. Congresswoman Haaland's leadership as the Secretary of the Interior will translate into beneficial outcomes that promote Tribal sovereignty, self-governance, and self-determination.

Before Congresswoman Haaland can serve as the Secretary of the Interior, the Senate must vote on her confirmation. With strong opposition to her confirmation coming from the oil and gas industry and the Senators it supports, it is critically important that she receive a strong showing of support from Tribal Nations and citizens. All members of the U.S. Senate must understand the importance of this confirmation and its implications for the delivery of the trust obligation.

If you haven't already, USET SPF encourages its Tribal Nation Membership to send letters of support to their Senate Delegations in support of Congresswoman Haaland's confirmation as Secretary of the Interior. To download a sample template letter to send to your Senate Delegation, [click here](#). To find office contact information for your Senate Delegations, please visit the "[Senators of the 117th Congress](#)" contact page.

Additionally, we include links to a [national Tribal Leader letter](#) that will be transmitted to Senate leadership, as well as an [Action Page](#) designed to connect individuals with their Senators. Both of these items are being provided courtesy of [IllumiNative](#), a USET SPF partner organization. Illuminative will also be coordinating a Week of Action in support of Congresswoman Haaland's nomination during the week of February 22nd. More information on this event can be found on IllumiNative's [facebook page](#).

This is a historic moment for Indian Country and represents significant progress in the evolution of our nation-to-nation relationship with the United States. The nomination of Congresswoman Haaland sends a powerful message to Tribal Nations and Native people—one of regard, honor, affirmation, and visibility. For too long, Native experiences, perspective, understanding, and voices have been largely invisible or fundamentally misrepresented in public discourse. Too often, we are a forgotten people

in our own homelands. For these reasons, and many others, the importance of this nomination cannot be overstated.

USET SPF will continue to monitor the status of Congresswoman Haaland's confirmation, including further opportunities to engage, and will provide updates as they develop. Please reach out to Liz Malerba at lmalerba@usetinc.org with questions or for further information.