



USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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Tribal Homelands/Federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes for Tribal Land Acquisition Tribal Leader Talking Points White House Tribal Nations Summit

Summary

USET SPF remains focused on the restoration of Tribal homelands as a top priority. We continue to work to reacquire our homelands, which are fundamental to our existence as sovereign governments and our ability to thrive as vibrant, healthy, self-sufficient communities. The federal government's objective in the trust responsibility and obligations to our Nations must be to support healthy and sustainable self-determining Tribal governments, which fundamentally includes the restoration of lands to all federally-recognized Tribal Nations, as well as the legal defense of these land acquisitions

Since 1977, the Department of the Interior (DOI) has issued billions in Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) to local governments that help offset losses in property taxes due to the existence of nontaxable federal lands within their boundaries. However, while PILT payments are made for lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Forest Service (part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture) and for Federal water projects and some military installations, lands held in trust for Tribal Nations are not currently eligible. USET SPF [believes that PILT](#) (or a PILT-like mechanism) for lands put into trust could remove barriers to the restoration of Tribal homelands while also easing the perceived burdens of and impacts to local government as a result of lost tax revenue.

Talking Points/Recommendations

- As with other processes and functions central to the Trust obligation, it is incumbent upon DOI to secure the federal funding required to fulfill its responsibilities in the Fee to Trust process, including staffing infrastructure and any funding for PILT to state and local governments. This means providing a full accounting of its financial needs to the Office of Management and Budget and Congress. We further request DOI's support in making Tribal trust land acquisition eligible for PILT in order to facilitate the expeditious and continued restoration of Tribal homelands.
- We urge parity for all federally recognized Tribal Nations within the land-into-trust process through the Administrations active and continued support for a fix to the Supreme Court's 2009 decision in *Carciari v. Salazar*. We call upon DOI to work with Congress to enact legislation that: (1) reaffirms the status of current trust lands; and (2) confirms that the Secretary has authority to take land into trust for all federally recognized Tribal Nations.

Because there is Strength in Unity