



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.
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USET Resolution No. 2011:010

SUPPORT REFORM OF THE INDIAN LONG TERM LEASING ACT OF 1955 TO CREATE AN EFFECTIVE LEASING PROCESS OPERATED BY INDIAN TRIBES WITH EFFICIENT ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CONDITIONS

- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-five (25) federally recognized Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** in 1955, Congress enacted the Indian Long-Term Land Leasing Act (25 U.S.C. §415) authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to review and approve or disapprove leases of restricted Indian lands for agricultural, residential, business, and religious purposes; and
- WHEREAS,** in the 55 years since its enactment, §415 has been criticized by Indian Tribes because of the statutory limits on lease terms as well as the time-consuming Secretarial review and approval process; and
- WHEREAS,** faced with the limitations of §415, more than 50 Indian Tribes have sought relief from the lease term limits contained in §415 and have secured specific (Tribe-by-Tribe) congressional authorization to enter 99-year leases which, while providing a longer term, still require the review and approval of the Secretary; and
- WHEREAS,** Congress is considering legislation that will amend the Indian Long Term Leasing Act of 1955 to authorize willing Indian Tribes to develop and administer Tribal regulations governing the leasing of surface lands without the review or approval of the Secretary; and
- WHEREAS,** Indian Tribes need an effective surface site leasing process to expedite the development of housing, infrastructure, and related development on Indian lands that includes an efficient environmental review regime; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors strongly supports Congressional reform of the Indian Long-Term Leasing Act (25 U.S.C. §415) to promote Tribal sovereignty and to encourage economic development on Tribal lands; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors supports such surface leasing reform that includes an environmental protection regime appropriate to surface leasing activities, and one that does not impose overly burdensome requirements on Tribal Governments and agencies; and, be it further
- RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors maintains that proposed surface leasing reform as described here in will serve goals of Tribal decision making and Tribal economic development.

CERTIFICATION

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Verona, NY, on Thursday, October 14, 2010.



Brian Patterson, President
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.



Robert McGhee, Secretary
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

“Because there is strength in Unity”