

November 13 Re:USET SPF ACTION Alert: Urge the Inclusion of Tribal Tax Provisions in Senate Tax Reform Bill

Dear USET SPF Board of Directors and DC Tribal Reps,

Recently, we reported that the tax reform legislation offered by the House Ways and Means Committee largely ignored the tax priorities Tribal Nations and organizations have been working on for years. In response, we sent and circulated the below template letter directed to Senate Finance Committee Chairman Hatch (R-UT) urging several Tribal tax priorities be included in the Committee's bill. USET SPF's advocacy helped to generate a [Senate sign-on letter](#) [linked] to Chairman Hatch that was ultimately sent from Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Chairman Hoeven (R-ND), Senator Moran (R-KS), and Senator Murkowski (R-AK).

This advocacy shows some signs of progress in calling attention to Tribal tax priorities. As the Senate Finance Committee begins its mark up its tax reform bill this week, Chairman Hatch has listed 27 amendments – five of which focus on bills introduced on tax issues affecting Tribal Nations. Those amendments are the following:

- #9 Permanent Accelerated Depreciation on Indian Reservations: Would make permanent the provision for Accelerated depreciation for business property on an Indian reservation (sec. 168(j)).
- #15—Sen. Murkowski's Alaska Settlement Trust Improvement Act
- #17 S. 548, the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act of 2017: Makes improvements to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program.
- #20 S. 1935, Tribal Tax and Investment Reform Act of 2017: Amendment would specify the treatment of Tribal Nations as States with Respect to Bond Issuance, modify the treatment of pension and employee benefit plans maintained by a Tribal Government, modify the treatment of Tribal Foundations and charities, improve the effectiveness of Tribal child support enforcement agencies, and recognize Tribal governments for purposes of determining whether a child has special needs eligible for the adoption tax credit.
- #21 S. 2012, Tribal Economic Assistance Act of 2017: Amendment would repeal the essential government function test for Tribal governments with respect to issuance of tax-exempt bonds, make permanent accelerated depreciation business property on an Indian reservation and the Indian Employment Tax Credit, modify the New Markets Tax Credit Program, and create Tribal School Construction Bonding Accounts.

In order to be included in the Senate Finance Committee bill, however, the Committee must adopt these amendments. **USET SPF is urging member Tribal Nations to contact members of the Senate Finance Committee and request that they support the Hatch Amendments #9, #15, #17, #20 and #21. In particular, we are seeking outreach to the following Senators on the Committee from the USET SPF region:**

- **Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX)**
- **Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC)**
- **Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC)**
- **Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA)**

Senate Finance Committee members are listed here: <https://www.finance.senate.gov/about/membership>

If your Senators do not serve on the Senate Finance Committee, you can still help! Please ask them to write to Chairman Hatch in support of the above amendments.

To determine your Senators and receive their contact information, please click [here](#).

As always, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you,

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From: Liz Malerba

Sent: Friday, November 03, 2017 2:59 PM

Subject: USET SPF ACTION Alert: Urge the Inclusion of Tribal Tax Provisions in Senate Tax Reform Bill

Importance: High

Dear USET SPF Board of Directors and DC Tribal Reps,

As you may already be aware, the House Ways and Means Committee introduced its [version of tax reform legislation](#) [summary linked] yesterday. With the exception of a provision related to the tax deductibility of Indian Health Service student loan repayments, the House tax reform bill does not contain any Tribal priorities. **This makes the Senate version of the bill, which is expected to be introduced next Wednesday, November 8th, critical to our efforts to achieve parity for Tribal governments and expanded economic development opportunities in Indian Country under the tax code.**

In pursuit of the inclusion of Tribal provisions, this afternoon, USET SPF transmitted a [letter](#) [linked] to the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT), along with all members of the Senate Finance and Indian Affairs Committees, to urge the inclusion of the provisions contained in the following bills:

- The Tribal Economic Assistance Act of 2017 (S. 2012), introduced by Senator Hoeven, with Senators Murkowski and Heitkamp, which would remove regulatory obstacles that have impeded tribal access to tax incentives for community investments and make permanent several important tax credits that will entice private investment in tribal businesses and tribal communities;

- The Tribal Tax and Investment Reform Act of 2017 (S. 1935), introduced by Senator Moran, which will spur much-needed economic development on Indian lands, promote tax fairness, and strengthen tribal self-determination and self-sufficiency; and
- The Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act of 2017 (S. 548), which would modify the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit to improve incentives for developers to invest in building affordable housing in tribal communities.

These bills reflect many of the priorities found within [USET SPF's Comprehensive Tax Reform Platform](#) [linked]. **In support of this effort, USET SPF is urging member Tribal Nations to transmit letters via email as soon as possible to Chairman Hatch, along with your Senators, particularly those that sit on the [Senate Finance Committee](#) [membership linked].**

To assist you with this outreach we have prepared a [Tribal template letter](#) [linked].

Now is a critical time for the Senate to hear from Tribal Nations in support of Tribal tax priorities.

As always, I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you,

Liz Malerba ~ *Citizen of the Mohegan Tribe*
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