



United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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April 2, 2014

The Honorable Paul A. Gosar
U.S. House of Representatives
504 Cannon Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: American Indian Trust Responsibility Review Act of 2014.

Dear Congressman Gosar,

On behalf of the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc., an inter-tribal organization representing 26 federally recognized Tribes in the South and Eastern regions of the United States, I am writing to express our support for the American Indian Trust Responsibility Review Act of 2014.

USET believes that a fundamental review of the trust relationship, with Indian country as a full partner in that review, has been long overdue. As expressed in our October 2012 *Advancing the Trust Responsibility: Bold Concepts for a Fairer and More Prosperous Future for Indian Country*, it is our intent to build a new framework for the Tribal-Federal relationship that provides Tribes with an equal say in the defining of that relationship, instead of it almost entirely being defined by the Federal government. This analysis starts from the conclusion that the defects in the trust responsibility are systematic in nature and therefore must be addressed at the systematic level.

All three branches of the Federal government play an important role in the trust relationship and have a trust responsibility to Indian Country. The American Indian Trust Responsibility Review Act of 2014, which benefited from input from Indian Country including most notably a USET-member Tribe, the Oneida Indian Nation of New York, provides an opportunity to define a new vision for the trust relationship for the 21st Century that honors Tribal sovereignty, ensures the trust responsibility is upheld, and strengthens Tribal relations with the Federal government, and with state and local governments.

USET looks forward to being actively engaged in the advancement of this legislation and the ongoing dialogue over the nature of the trust relationship.

Respectfully,

Brian Patterson
President

"Because there is strength in Unity"