

**TESTIMONY OF
MICHAEL S. BLACK
DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS
ON
H.R. 726, TO AMEND THE GRAND RONDE RESERVATION ACT**

JULY 24, 2012

Chairman Young, Ranking Member Lujan, and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Michael Black and I am the Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Administration's views on H.R. 726, a bill to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to make technical corrections, and for other purposes. The Department of the Interior (Department) supports H.R. 726.

Taking land into trust is one of the most important functions that the Department undertakes on behalf of Indian tribes. Homelands are essential to the health, safety, and welfare of the tribal governments. Thus, the Department has made the restoration of tribal homelands a priority.

H.R. 726 amends an Act to establish a reservation for the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, Pub. L. No. 100-425 (Sept. 9, 1988), to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to place in trust approximately 288 acres of real property located within the boundaries of the original 1857 reservation of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon if the real property is conveyed or otherwise transferred to the United States by or on behalf of the Tribe. Furthermore, the bill provides that the Secretary is to treat all applications to take land into trust within the boundaries of the original 1857 reservation as an on-reservation trust acquisition, and that all real property taken into trust within those boundaries after September 9, 1988, are to be considered part of the Tribe's reservation.

Again, the Department supports H.R. 726. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on H.R. 726. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS
H.R. 6141, A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE ADDITION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY TO THE
RESERVATION OF THE SILETZ TRIBE IN THE STATE OF OREGON**

JULY 24, 2012

Chairman Young, Ranking Member Lujan, and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Michael Black and I am the Director for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's (Department) views on H.R. 6141, a bill to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Siletz Tribe.

Taking land into trust is one of the most important functions that the Department undertakes on behalf of Indian tribes. Homelands are essential to the health, safety, and welfare of the tribal governments. Thus, this Administration has made the restoration of tribal homelands a priority. This Administration is committed to the restoration of tribal homelands, through the Department's acquisition of lands in trust for tribes, where appropriate. While the Department acknowledges that tribes near the Siletz Tribe oppose H.R. 6141, the Department supports H.R. 6141.

H.R. 6141 would amend the Siletz Tribe Indian Restoration Act, 25 U.S.C. § 711e, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to place land into trust for the Siletz Tribe. The lands lie within the original 1855 Siletz Coast Reservation and are located in the counties of Benton, Douglas, Lane, Lincoln, Tillamook, and Yamhill, which are all located within the State of Oregon. H.R. 6141 would also provide that such land would be considered and evaluated as an on-reservation acquisition under 25 C.F.R. § 151.10 and become part of the Tribe's reservation. The bill does not make the original Siletz Reservation into a reservation for the Siletz Tribe or create tribal jurisdiction over the original Siletz Reservation.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department's views on this legislation. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.