



May 7, 2024

The Hon. Harriet Hageman, Chair
 Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs
 Committee on Natural Resources
 U.S. House of Representatives
 1331 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Hon. Teresa Leger Fernández, Ranking Member
 Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs
 Committee on Natural Resources
 U.S. House of Representatives
 1331 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515

**JOINT STATEMENT OF SUPPORT AND CALL FOR CONGRESSIONAL
 HEARING ON H.R. 7859, THE TERRA ACT**

Dear Chair Hageman and Ranking Member Leger Fernández:

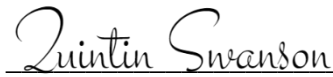
We, the undersigned Tribal organizations and Tribal Nations, write to express our united and wholehearted support for the Tribal Environmental Resiliency Resources Act (TERRA Act), introduced as H.R. 7859 on April 2, 2024. We call on the Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs to schedule a hearing on H.R. 7859 in a timely and expedient manner.

Tribal Nations throughout Indian Country are contending with the intensifying effects of climate change, including natural disasters of higher frequency and severity, and the destruction of our environments and lands that support our communities and traditions. Tribal Nations in coastal areas, and disproportionately in Alaska, are most impacted by sea level rise and erosion. In some cases, these impacts are so severe they have forced Tribal Nations to make the emotionally and logistically difficult decision to move their entire Tribal communities to safer locations.

Despite these urgent concerns, there are few federal resources dedicated to long-term Tribal environmental resiliency, and many barriers to access. The TERRA Act addresses this by establishing a program in the Department of the Interior to act as a navigational tool for Tribal Nations and provide a path to comprehensive climate solutions we can customize to our own communities and implement for ourselves. Modeled on the success of the P.L. 102-477 program, the TERRA Act streamlines access to existing federal resources and expedites federal processes tied to activities covered by TERRA plans in a manner that increases the ability of Tribal Nations to exercise our inherent sovereignty and right to self-determination. We fully support the TERRA Act as legislation that promotes Tribal self-governance and represents a step in carrying out the federal government's trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations.

We urge the Subcommittee to treat this critical legislation with the urgency it demands and promptly schedule a hearing on H.R. 7859, the TERRA Act. Additionally, we expect Congress to uphold its trust and treaty obligations by prioritizing and enacting this bill to support the environmental resiliency of Tribal Nations and our efforts to protect and preserve our people, our homelands, and our traditional ways of life.

Sincerely,




Quintin Swanson
Quintin Swanson
Chairman
Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe



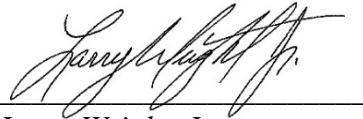
Kristopher K. Peters
Kristopher K. Peters
Chairman
Squaxin Island Tribe



Everett Colegrove
Everett Colegrove
Vice-Chairman
Hoopa Valley Tribe



Alberta Unok
Alberta Unok
President/CEO
Alaska Native Health Board



Larry Wright, Jr.
Larry Wright, Jr.
Executive Director
National Congress of American Indians



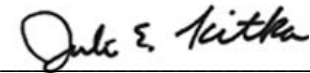
Chief William Smith
Chief William Smith
Chairman
National Indian Health Board



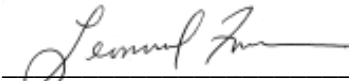
Kirk Francis
Kirk Francis
President
**United South and Eastern Tribes
Sovereignty Protection Fund**



W. Ron Allen
W. Ron Allen
Chairman
**Self-Governance Communication and
Education Tribal Consortium**



Julie Kitka
Julie Kitka
President
Alaska Federation of Natives



Leonard Forsman
Leonard Forsman
President
Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians



Tehassi Hill
Tehassi Hill
Vice President
Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes

cc: Hon. Bruce Westerman
Hon. Mike Simpson
Hon. Sharice Davids
Ken Degenfelder
Bobby Ahern

Hon. Raúl Grijalva
Hon. Tom Cole

Jocelyn Broman
Qay-liwh Ammon