



Rep. Hoyle’s bill to restore fairness, help invalidate Consent Decree, passes U.S. House

WASHINGTON – On Dec. 11, U.S. Rep. Val Hoyle’s (OR-04) bill to restore fairness for the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (Siletz) passed in the U.S. House of Representatives by voice vote.

The legislation will provide the legal ability for the Siletz and the State of Oregon to change a discriminatory legal clause that has severely limited the hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering abilities of the Siletz. Sen. Jeff Merkley leads the Senate version of the bill.

“The Siletz Tribe never should have been forced to give up their sovereign right to hunt, fish and gather on their ancestral lands,” said Hoyle. “We have a responsibility to right this historic wrong and ensure the Siletz are treated as other Tribes are. As a new member of Congress, I am grate-

ful to have had the opportunity for this important bill to be my first standalone bill to pass in the House. I hope the Senate will move it forward as soon as possible so it can become a law.”

“I want to thank Rep. Hoyle for her commitment to setting history straight for the Siletz Tribe and its members,” said Siletz Tribal Chairman Delores Pigsley. “House passage of her legislation is an important milestone and its enactment will be the most significant, positive act of federal policy since Congress restored federal recognition to the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.”

“The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians were forced to give up their traditional ability to hunt, fish and gather on Tribal land as the price to restore their

homelands. This historic injustice has stood for far too long,” said Merkley. “I am thrilled Rep. Hoyle ensured this legislation, which I’ve been leading in the Senate, passed the House. This is a critical step toward justice. I will keep pressing for the Senate to do the same.”

Hoyle’s bill, H.R. 2839, will allow the Siletz Tribe to return to federal court to request the termination or modification of the consent decree from 1980 that unfairly forced the Siletz to give up their traditional hunting and fishing activities as a condition for having their land and status restored.

While the Oregon Fish & Wildlife Commission recently approved a historic new hunting and fishing agreement with the Siletz Tribe, the State of Oregon

can choose or be forced by litigation to return to the previous unconscionable agreement. The legislation is necessary to invalidate the consent decree.

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**Breaking news
on Dec. 19**

The U.S. Senate also has passed the bill. It is on its way to President Joe Biden for his signature.

NCAI creates new foundation to help Tribal nations forge path to prosperity

WASHINGTON – In a historic move coinciding with National Philanthropy Day in November 2023, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) announced the launch of its philanthropic arm, the NCAI Foundation (NCAIF). This marks a profound and unprecedented commitment to supporting Tribal nations on their transformative journey toward shared prosperity and resilience.

“Today marks a pivotal moment in our ongoing journey towards equity and empowerment for Tribal nations,” said Greg Masten (Yurok), president of the newly formed NCAI Foundation. “The NCAIF is not just a foundation; it’s a beacon of hope and a testament to our unwavering commitment to uphold Tribal sovereignty, empower our leaders and build a resilient future for our youth and our nations. Through the NCAIF, we are forging true partnerships between Tribal nations and philanthropy, dedicated to creating a future where Tribal nations thrive, supported by the resources and recognition they rightfully deserve.”

The NCAI Foundation’s mission is multifaceted, focusing on four core areas: Upholding Tribal Sovereignty, Empowering Tribal Leadership, Cultivating Youth Leadership, and Fortifying Tribal Nations.

By offering grant funding under the Fortifying Tribal Nations program, NCAIF aims to be a catalyst for change, providing more than just financial resources but also serving as a pivotal connecting point for Tribal nations and the philanthropic sector.

Despite American Indians and Alaska Natives representing nearly 3 percent of the U.S. population, they have historically received less than 0.5 percent of philanthropic dollars for their strategies or initiatives. NCAIF seeks to address this disparity by ensuring that more resources are directed toward supporting Tribal communities in diverse areas of work.

A cornerstone of NCAIF’s approach is the innovative Equity and Sovereignty Framework. This will guide the foundation’s grantmaking processes, ensuring they are deeply rooted in principles of equity and respect for Tribal sovereignty.

The framework will also inform NCAIF’s approach to addressing the philanthropy sector’s interaction with Tribal nations, emphasizing collaboration, respect for Tribal governance and the promotion of culturally appropriate practices. It’s a significant step toward rectifying historical imbalances and fostering true, respectful partnerships between philanthropic entities and Tribal nations.

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Photo by Diane Rodriguez

Natural Resources Director Mike Kennedy get wrapped in a Pendleton blanket by Tribal CEO Kurtis Barker after being named 2023 Employee of the Year. His nomination reads as follows: “Mike, who plans to retire in early 2024, worked tirelessly on the new Hunting and Fishing Program this past year. His efforts, involving coordination with various entities, led to a significant accomplishment—an agreement with the State that has been a goal for many years.”

The new agreement with the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife expands the hunting and fishing area that Tribal members can use. The Tribe is now able to issue its own licenses. The agreement also has the Tribe working cooperatively with the state on projects to enhance fish and wildlife.

Changes to Candidates Fair

For the 2024 Tribal Council election, we have reserved the ballroom at Aces Sports Bar & Grill in Lincoln City, Ore., for the Candidates Fair on Jan. 6, 2024, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We will have lunch (on your own) from 12-1 p.m.

We’ll have our usual three hours in the morning for statements and questions, break for lunch, then return for two hours in the afternoon in order to hear more from our candidates.

Please join us in person or view the Candidates Fair online in the Member Area of the Tribal website.

**Siletz Tribal offices will be closed Monday, Jan. 1,
for New Year’s Day and Monday, Jan. 15,
for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.**

**Tribal offices also will be closed Monday, Feb. 19,
for Presidents’ Day.**