



SPIRIT LAKE TRIBE

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For Inclusion in Press Release

Re: Spirit Lake Tribe Comments for publication relevant to the North Dakota Trust Lands Completion Act

The Spirit Lake Tribe has previously written to Senator Hoeven, Senator Cramer and Congressman Armstrong, expressing our support for the North Dakota Trust Lands Completion Act. The North Dakota Trust Lands Completion Act supports the relinquishment of state lands and minerals within reservations and the National Grasslands in exchange for select federal lands or minerals of equal value elsewhere in the state. The surrendered lands within the reservations would be held in trust for the Tribes—helping consolidate tribal ownership of the lands and minerals promised to the Tribes decades ago.

The Act is an important step towards restoring lands to tribal nations, preserving the Little Missouri National Grasslands, and enhancing funding of North Dakota public schools. The legislation is a win for all North Dakotans and will rectify over 130 years of checkerboard state ownership on reservations, paving the way for land and mineral transactions while rectifying an unfortunate ownership pattern and history. The Act would serve to strengthen tribal sovereignty within reservation boundaries while also affording the State access to lands and minerals without jurisdictional complexities.

We urge Congress to pass this legislation to benefit tribal communities, conservation within the National Grasslands and North Dakota children attending public schools.

Douglas Yankton

Chairman, Spirit Lake Tribal Council

Spirit Lake Tribe