

## Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

William Kirkland – Nomination as Asst. Secretary of Indian Affairs

10 September 2025

### **Highlights:**

This hearing centered on the committee vote on the nomination of William “Billy” Kirkland, a citizen of the Navajo Nation, for Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs at the Department of the Interior. The committee approved his nominations by a vote of 7-4.

### **Key Points:**

- Kirkland’s nomination received 48 letters of support from individual Tribes and Tribal organizations, with no letters of opposition.
- Kirkland committed to:
  - Spend 90 days listening to Native people to understand their priorities.
  - Develop an action plan based on those conversations.
  - Surround himself with knowledgeable staff to support Tribal priorities.
  - Treat all Tribes equally, regardless of treaty status, political affiliation, or federal recognition history.
- Senator Remarks:
  - [Senator Lisa Murkowski \(R-AK\)](#) expressed support for the nomination, emphasizing Kirkland’s connections within the administration and his potential to positively impact Native communities.
  - [Senator Brian Schatz \(D-HI\)](#) stressed the importance of Kirkland’s fiduciary role and his duty to respect the federal relationship with American Indians, Alaska Natives, and the Native Hawaiian community.
- The nomination was approved 7-4.