

House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs
Legislative Hearing on [H.R.4276](#), [H.R.515](#), [H.R.5682](#), and [H.R.5696](#)
November 19, 2025

Note:

- *IFAI is tracking the developments and updates related to H.R.5515 To amend the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act (ITARA)*

Opening

Representative Jeff Hurd, Chairman (R-CO)

- Acknowledged the return of the Representatives to Congress.
- Sponsor to H.R.5515 with Democratic colleagues Rep. Emily Randall (D-WA) and Rep. Val Hoyle (D-OR). Legislation was from the subcommittee's February oversight hearing on ITARA, where Tribal leaders expressed that the original law was not implemented as Congress intended.
- H.R.5515 makes the ITARA Demonstration Project permanent, expanding eligibility, clarifying federal trust responsibilities, and removing Tribal barriers.
- This bill is a step toward Tribal self-determination in managing trust assets.

Representative Teresa Leger Fernandez, Ranking Member (D-NM)

- Acknowledged return to Congress.
- ITARA would give Tribes more authority over managing their trust assets.
- The bill is an improvement on how Tribes can participate and utilize additional activities like wildfire mitigation work.
- All of this great work requires funding on the ground (e.g. personnel) so Congress needs to work together to get appropriations to support it.

Witnesses

- **Honorable Wena Supernaw**, Chair – Quapaw Nation, Oklahoma
 - In support of H.R.5696
- **Honorable Marc Luker**, Councilman – Pechanga Band of Indians, California
 - In support of H.R.5682
- **Mr. Tim Vredenburg**, Director of Forest Management – Cow Creek Umpqua Tribe of Indians, Oregon
 - In support of H.R.5515
 - Present at the hearing in support of ITARA, preventing it from lapsing and hopes to expand the scope of trust asset management.
 - Proposed amendments would facilitate broader tribal participation in ITARA and strengthens Tribal sovereignty in trust asset management.
 - Title II of ITARA authorized a 10-year demonstration project (Indian Trust Asset Management Plans – ITAMPs), which allowed for greater Tribal responsibility in forestry trust assets and surface leases in Indian Country.

- Only 3 ITAMPs have been approved due to Tribes being unaware of its existence.
- Authority is due to sunset in 2026. Tribes could lose a critical tool for expanding Tribal self-determination.
- Cow Creek was one of the first Tribes to implement ITARA. Successes include work in wildfire preparedness and resilience, ecosystem restoration, efficiency and cost savings, economic benefits, and wildfire response capacity.
- ITARA places more decision making in the hands of Tribes who are more equipped to balance the cultural, ecological and economic values of their own communities.
- Strongly encouraged Congress to act quickly.

Discussion

Representative Jared Huffman (D-CA)

- ITARA strengthens Tribal self-governance by providing greater Tribal authority over management of their assets.
- This bill would remove administrative barriers for Tribes
- H.R.5515 would amend ITARA to remove administrative barriers and permanently reauthorize the use of demonstration projects.

Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez (D-NM)

- Presented an article stating 53% decrease in wildfire mitigation efforts (e.g. prescribed burns, hazardous fuel treatments) in the Trump administration.
- Asked Mr. Vredenburg whether they've been able to continue to work because of having more control.
 - Mr. Vredenburg responded that H.R.5515 would further streamline the processes and lower cost. And that they've been able to continue to work in prioritizing their work because of Self-determination.

Representative Emily Randall (D-WA)

- Asked how the amendment could allow more Tribes to successfully implement ITARA as intended
- Mr. Vredenburg responded that H.R.5515 addresses hurdles and streamlines the process of Tribes to be able to enter into the ITARA authority and that work done now would be worth it to increase Tribal participation.