



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Board of Supervisors

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Diane Dillon
Chair

August 25, 2015

The Honorable John Barrasso
Office of U.S. Senator John Barrasso
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: SUPPORT, IF AMENDED – S. 1879 (Barrasso): The Interior Improvement Act

Dear Senator Barrasso:

The Napa County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously today to support your bill, S. 1879, the Interior Improvement Act, if amended to ensure the best fee-to-trust process possible for Tribes and affected local governments.

The Board, through many decades of hard work, has succeeded in protecting its world-renowned agricultural lands and wine industry. We cannot stress enough how important it is for us to finally establish a clear and strong fee-to-trust process.

The Board highly appreciates your introduction of S. 1879 that seeks to address longstanding problems with the existing fee-to-trust land acquisition process at the U.S. Department of the Interior and the possible ways of addressing the U.S. Supreme Court's *Carcieri v. Salazar* decision. Specifically, the Board supports the bill's following improvements: requiring notification of affected county governments and allowing for comment on all public concerns, not just those affecting disputes in jurisdiction and revenue loss; and encouraging the development of cooperative agreements between tribes and contiguous jurisdictions.

While the Board believes S. 1879 is a strong bill that clears up much of the of the vagueness and opaqueness of fee-to-trust acquisitions, we also believe the following suggested changes would result a better process for all:

- comment periods should be extended;
- "contiguous jurisdiction" definition should be revised to ensure engagement of the affected county;
- any affected party should be allowed to seek judicial review;
- "mitigation" should be defined;
- change in use should be subject to review by the public and contiguous jurisdictions.

Brad Wagenknecht
District 1

Mark Luce
District 2

Diane Dillon
District 3

Alfredo Pedroza
District 4

Keith Caldwell
District 5

In closing, the Board very much appreciates your thoughtful effort in introducing S. 1879 to correct longstanding oversights. We agree with the recommendations in your bill. And we look forward to supporting S. 1879 if our suggested amendments are incorporated into the measure to ensure fairness, clarity, and the best possible fee-to-trust land acquisition process for all.

Sincerely,



Diane Dillon
Chair, Napa County Board of Supervisors

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Congressman Mike Thompson
Senator Lois Wolk
Assembly Member Bill Dodd
Members, Napa County Board of Supervisors
Nancy Watt, Napa County Executive Officer
Thane Young, Van Scoyoc Associates
Paul Yoder/Karen Lange, Shaw/Yoder/Antwih
Rural County Representatives of California
California State Association of Counties