

# H.R. \_\_\_\_\_, the Mono Lake Kutzadika<sup>a</sup> Tribe Recognition Act

Rep. Paul Cook

## What is it?

This bill would grant the Mono Lake Kutzadika<sup>a</sup> Tribe federal recognition as a distinct Native American tribe.

A federally recognized tribe is an American Indian or Alaska Native tribal entity that is recognized as having a government-to-government relationship with the United States. Federally recognized tribes possess certain inherent rights of self-government and tribal sovereignty, and are entitled to receive certain federal benefits, services, and protections because of their special relationship with the United States.

## Who are the Mono Lake Kutzadika?

The Mono Lake Kutzadika<sup>a</sup> people are the indigenous people of the Mono Basin in east-central California and adjacent Nevada. Tribal members have lived near Mono Lake for time immemorial. They have functioned as a tribal community long before trappers, miners, and other white settlers came to California beginning in the early to mid-1800s. Despite significant challenges, the Mono Lake Kutzadika<sup>a</sup> Tribe has remained a distinct community, both politically and culturally. They have maintained their unique practices, including harvesting the alkali fly pupae from Mono Lake. This traditional food source for the tribe is also how the tribe derives its name: Kutzadika<sup>a</sup>, roughly translated, means “fly eaters.”

The Mono Lake Kutzadika<sup>a</sup> Tribe has strongly and consistently advocated for preservation and conservation of Mono Lake, which is the center of their culture and history. The tribe has also worked with the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service to honor their traditional gathering and hunting lands and unique customs. Local government and local divisions of the Forest Service and National Park Service recognize the Mono Lake Kutzadika<sup>a</sup> Tribe as a political entity to engage.

There is **strong local support** for the federal recognition of the Mono Lake Kutzadika<sup>a</sup> Tribe, including:

- Benton Paiute Tribe / Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute Tribe
- Bridgeport Indian Colony
- Bishop-Paiute Tribe
- Big Pine Paiute Tribe of Owens Valley
- Timbi-sha Shoshone Tribe
- Forth Independence Indian Tribe
- Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe
- Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribe
- North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians of California
- Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians
- Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation
- Mono County, Board of Supervisors
- Mono Lake Committee
- Sierra Club, Town of Bishop
- Friends of the Inyo
- Dept. of Interior – Yosemite National Park
- California State University, Chico – Dept. of Anthropology

If you have questions about the bill or would like to be added as a cosponsor, please contact Jocelyn Broman ([jocelyn.broman@mail.house.gov](mailto:jocelyn.broman@mail.house.gov)) in Rep. Cook’s office.