

The Tribe and the lands that would be held into trust under this bill are located in the Eighth Congressional District, which is represented by Republican Congressman PETE STAUBER. I want to thank Mr. STAUBER for his hard work on this legislation because, without it, we would not be here today.

After the House companion bill, H.R. 733, was introduced by Congresswoman McCOLLUM, it was determined that a number of the parcels affected by the bills had encumbrances, mainly those of public utility co-ops.

This was, again, another bill that was not properly vetted prior to introduction by a Member from this district. I truly believe that, since that time, Congressman STAUBER has been a leader in efforts to bring the Tribe and several utility co-ops together to come to a legal agreement to resolve those issues with these easements.

We have some concerns regarding the enforceability of this document but appreciate the willingness of all parties to seek a consensus. I think that is the important part today, that there is finally a consensus on this issue. That is a policy the Natural Resources Committee majority has little interest in pursuing because, unfortunately, S. 199 does not reflect this improvement in the bill text. Let's hope the parties will continue to act in good faith despite this.

I, again, thank Mr. STAUBER for his efforts and the members of the committee who worked across the aisle to make this happen today. I am pleased he joined our committee during this year. He has been one of the more active members of the committee during his short tenure.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this valuable legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 199.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

INDIAN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2020

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 212) to amend the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000, the Buy Indian Act, and the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to provide industry and economic development opportunities to Indian communities, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 212

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act of 2020".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1)(A) to bring industry and economic development to Indian communities, Indian Tribes must overcome a number of barriers, including—

- (i) geographical location;
- (ii) lack of infrastructure or capacity;
- (iii) lack of sufficient collateral and capital; and

- (iv) regulatory bureaucracy relating to—

- (I) development; and

- (II) access to services provided by the Federal Government; and

- (B) the barriers described in subparagraph (A) often add to the cost of doing business in Indian communities;

- (2) Indian Tribes—

- (A) enact laws and exercise sovereign governmental powers;

- (B) determine policy for the benefit of Tribal members; and

- (C) produce goods and services for consumers;

- (3) the Federal Government has—

- (A) an important government-to-government relationship with Indian Tribes; and

- (B) a role in facilitating healthy and sustainable Tribal economies;

- (4) the input of Indian Tribes in developing Federal policy and programs leads to more meaningful and effective measures to assist Indian Tribes and Indian entrepreneurs in building Tribal economies;

- (5)(A) many components of Tribal infrastructure need significant repair or replacement; and

- (B) access to private capital for projects in Indian communities—

- (i) may not be available; or

- (ii) may come at a higher cost than such access for other projects;

- (6)(A) Federal capital improvement programs, such as those that facilitate tax-exempt bond financing and loan guarantees, are tools that help improve or replace crumbling infrastructure;

- (B) lack of parity in treatment of an Indian Tribe as a governmental entity under Federal tax and certain other regulatory laws impedes, in part, the ability of Indian Tribes to raise capital through issuance of tax-exempt debt, invest as an accredited investor, and benefit from other investment incentives accorded to State and local governmental entities; and

- (C) as a result of the disparity in treatment of Indian Tribes described in subparagraph (B), investors may avoid financing, or demand a premium to finance, projects in Indian communities, making the projects more costly or inaccessible;

- (7) there are a number of Federal loan guarantee programs available to facilitate financing of business, energy, economic, housing, and community development projects in Indian communities, and those programs may support public-private partnerships for infrastructure development, but improvements and support are needed for those programs specific to Indian communities to facilitate more effectively private financing for infrastructure and other urgent development needs; and

- (8)(A) most real property held by Indian Tribes is trust or restricted land that essentially cannot be held as collateral; and

- (B) while creative solutions, such as leasehold mortgages, have been developed in response to the problem identified in subparagraph (A), some solutions remain subject to review and approval by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, adding additional costs and delay to Tribal projects.

graph (A), some solutions remain subject to review and approval by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, adding additional costs and delay to Tribal projects.

SEC. 3. NATIVE AMERICAN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, TRADE PROMOTION, AND TOURISM ACT OF 2000.

(a) FINDINGS; PURPOSES.—Section 2 of the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000 (25 U.S.C. 4301) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(C) APPLICABILITY TO INDIAN-OWNED BUSINESSES.—The findings and purposes in subsections (a) and (b) shall apply to any Indian-owned business governed—

"(1) by Tribal laws regulating trade or commerce on Indian lands; or

"(2) pursuant to section 5 of the Act of August 15, 1876 (19 Stat. 200, chapter 289; 25 U.S.C. 261)."

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 3 of the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000 (25 U.S.C. 4302) is amended—

- (1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (6) and paragraphs (7) through (9), as paragraphs (2) through (7) and paragraphs (9) through (11), respectively;

- (2) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) the following:

- "(1) DIRECTOR.—The term 'Director' means the Director of Native American Business Development appointed pursuant to section 4(a)(2); and

- (3) by inserting after paragraph (7) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) the following:

- "(8) OFFICE.—The term 'Office' means the Office of Native American Business Development established by section 4(a)(1)."

(c) OFFICE OF NATIVE AMERICAN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.—Section 4 of the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000 (25 U.S.C. 4303) is amended—

- (1) in subsection (a)—

- (A) in paragraph (1)—

- (i) by striking "Department of Commerce" and inserting "Office of the Secretary"; and

- (ii) by striking "(referred to in this Act as the 'Office'))"; and

- (B) in paragraph (2), in the first sentence, by striking "(referred to in this Act as the 'Director'))"; and

- (2) by adding at the end the following:

- "(c) DUTIES OF DIRECTOR.—

- "(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall serve as—

- "(A) the program and policy advisor to the Secretary with respect to the trust and governmental relationship between the United States and Indian Tribes; and

- "(B) the point of contact for Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, and Indians regarding—

- "(i) policies and programs of the Department of Commerce; and

- "(ii) other matters relating to economic development and doing business in Indian lands.

"(2) DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION.—The Director shall coordinate with all offices and agencies within the Department of Commerce to ensure that each office and agency has an accountable process to ensure—

- "(A) meaningful and timely coordination and assistance, as required by this Act; and

- "(B) consultation with Indian Tribes regarding the policies, programs, assistance, and activities of the offices and agencies.

"(3) OFFICE OPERATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section not more than \$2,000,000 for each fiscal year."

(d) INDIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES.—The Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000 is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 8 (25 U.S.C. 4307) as section 10; and

(2) by inserting after section 7 (25 U.S.C. 4306) the following:

“SEC. 8. INDIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES.

“(a) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—Not later than 1 year after the enactment of this section, the Secretary, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Secretary of the Treasury shall coordinate—

“(1) to develop initiatives that—

“(A) encourage, promote, and provide education regarding investments in Indian communities through—

“(i) the loan guarantee program of Bureau of Indian Affairs under section 201 of the Indian Financing Act of 1974 (25 U.S.C. 1481);

“(ii) programs carried out using amounts in the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund established under section 104(a) of the Community Development Banking and Financial Institutions Act of 1994 (12 U.S.C. 4703(a)); and

“(iii) other capital development programs;

“(B) examine and develop alternatives that would qualify as collateral for financing in Indian communities; and

“(C) provide entrepreneur and other training relating to economic development through tribally controlled colleges and universities and other Indian organizations with experience in providing such training;

“(2) to consult with Indian Tribes and with the Securities and Exchange Commission to study, and collaborate to establish, regulatory changes necessary to qualify an Indian Tribe as an accredited investor for the purposes of sections 230.500 through 230.508 of title 17, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), consistent with the goals of promoting capital formation and ensuring qualifying Indian Tribes have the ability to withstand investment loss, on a basis comparable to other legal entities that qualify as accredited investors who are not natural persons;

“(3) to identify regulatory, legal, or other barriers to increasing investment, business, and economic development, including qualifying or approving collateral structures, measurements of economic strength, and contributions of Indian economies in Indian communities through the Authority established under section 4 of the Indian Tribal Regulatory Reform and Business Development Act of 2000 (25 U.S.C. 4301 note);

“(4) to ensure consultation with Indian Tribes regarding increasing investment in Indian communities and the development of the report required in paragraph (5); and

“(5) not less than once every 2 years, to provide a report to Congress regarding—

“(A) improvements to Indian communities resulting from such initiatives and recommendations for promoting sustained growth of the Tribal economies;

“(B) results of the study and collaboration regarding the necessary changes referenced in paragraph (2) and the impact of allowing Indian Tribes to qualify as an accredited investor; and

“(C) the identified regulatory, legal, and other barriers referenced in paragraph (3).

“(b) WAIVER.—For assistance provided pursuant to section 108 of the Community Development Banking and Financial Institutions Act of 1994 (12 U.S.C. 4707) to benefit Native Community Development Financial Institutions, as defined by the Secretary of the Treasury, section 108(e) of such Act shall not apply.

“(c) INDIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FEASIBILITY STUDY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Government Accountability Office shall conduct a study and, not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this subsection, submit to

the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report on the findings of the study and recommendations.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The study shall include an assessment of each of the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The study shall assess current Federal capitalization and related programs and services that are available to assist Indian communities with business and economic development, including manufacturing, physical infrastructure (such as telecommunications and broadband), community development, and facilities construction for such purposes. For each of the Federal programs and services identified, the study shall assess the current use and demand by Indian Tribes, individuals, businesses, and communities of the programs, the capital needs of Indian Tribes, businesses, and communities related to economic development, the extent to which the programs and services overlap or are duplicative, and the extent that similar programs have been used to assist non-Indian communities compared to the extent used for Indian communities.

“(B) FINANCING ASSISTANCE.—The study shall assess and quantify the extent of assistance provided to non-Indian borrowers and to Indian (both Tribal and individual) borrowers (including information about such assistance as a percentage of need for Indian borrowers and for non-Indian borrowers, assistance to Indian borrowers and to non-Indian borrowers as a percentage of total applicants, and such assistance to Indian borrowers as individuals as compared to such assistance to Indian Tribes) through the loan programs, the loan guarantee programs, or bond guarantee programs of the—

“(i) Department of the Interior;
“(ii) Department of Agriculture;
“(iii) Department of Housing and Urban Development;
“(iv) Department of Energy;
“(v) Small Business Administration; and
“(vi) Community Development Financial Institutions Fund of the Department of the Treasury.

“(C) TAX INCENTIVES.—The study shall assess and quantify the extent of the assistance and allocations afforded for non-Indian projects and for Indian projects pursuant to each of the following tax incentive programs:

“(i) New market tax credit.
“(ii) Low income housing tax credit.
“(iii) Investment tax credit.
“(iv) Renewable energy tax incentives.
“(v) Accelerated depreciation.

“(D) TRIBAL INVESTMENT INCENTIVE.—The study shall assess various alternative incentives that could be provided to enable and encourage Tribal governments to invest in an Indian community development investment fund or bank.”.

(e) CONFORMING AND TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—The Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000 (25 U.S.C. 4301 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 3—

(A) in each of paragraphs (1), (4), and (8), by striking “tribe” and inserting “Tribe”; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking “The term ‘Indian tribe’ has the meaning given that term” and inserting “The term ‘Indian Tribe’ has the meaning given the term ‘Indian tribe’”;

(2) by striking “tribes” each place the term appears and inserting “Tribe”; and

(3) by striking “tribal” each place the term appears and inserting “Tribal”.

SEC. 4. BUY INDIAN ACT.

Section 23 of the Act of June 25, 1910 (commonly known as the “Buy Indian Act”) (36

Stat. 861, chapter 431; 25 U.S.C. 47) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 23. EMPLOYMENT OF INDIAN LABOR AND PURCHASE OF PRODUCTS OF INDIAN INDUSTRY; PARTICIPATION IN MENTOR-PROTEGE PROGRAM.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) INDIAN ECONOMIC ENTERPRISE.—The term ‘Indian economic enterprise’ has the meaning given the term in section 1480.201 of title 48, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations).

“(2) MENTOR FIRM; PROTEGE FIRM.—The terms ‘mentor firm’ and ‘protege firm’ have the meanings given those terms in section 831(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991 (10 U.S.C. 2302 note; Public Law 101-510).

“(3) SECRETARIES.—The term ‘Secretaries’ means—

“(A) the Secretary of the Interior; and
“(B) the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

“(b) ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Unless determined by one of the Secretaries to be impracticable and unreasonable—

“(A) Indian labor shall be employed; and

“(B) purchases of Indian industry products (including printing and facilities construction, notwithstanding any other provision of law) may be made in open market by the Secretaries.

“(2) MENTOR-PROTEGE PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Participation in the Mentor-Protege Program established under section 831(a) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991 (10 U.S.C. 2302 note; Public Law 101-510) or receipt of assistance under a developmental assistance agreement under that program shall not render any individual or entity involved in the provision of Indian labor or an Indian industry product ineligible to receive assistance under this section.

“(B) TREATMENT.—For purposes of this section, no determination of affiliation or control (whether direct or indirect) may be found between a protege firm and a mentor firm on the basis that the mentor firm has provided, or agreed to provide, to the protege firm, pursuant to a mentor-protege agreement, any form of developmental assistance described in section 831(f) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991 (10 U.S.C. 2302 note; Public Law 101-510).

“(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out this section, the Secretaries shall—

“(1) conduct outreach to Indian industrial entities;

“(2) provide training;

“(3) promulgate regulations in accordance with this section and with the regulations under part 1480 of title 48, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), to harmonize the procurement procedures of the Department of the Interior and the Department of Health and Human Services, to the maximum extent practicable;

“(4) require regional offices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service to aggregate data regarding compliance with this section;

“(5) require procurement management reviews by their respective Departments to include a review of the implementation of this section; and

“(6) consult with Indian Tribes, Indian industrial entities, and other stakeholders regarding methods to facilitate compliance with—

“(A) this section; and

“(B) other small business or procurement goals.

“(d) REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and not less frequently than once every 2

years thereafter, each of the Secretaries shall submit to the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report describing, during the period covered by the report, the implementation of this section by each of the respective Secretaries.

“(2) CONTENTS.—Each report under this subsection shall include, for each fiscal year during the period covered by the report—

“(A) the names of each agency under the respective jurisdiction of each of the Secretaries to which this section has been applied, and efforts made by additional agencies within the Secretaries’ respective Departments to use the procurement procedures under this Act;

“(B) a summary of the types of purchases made from, and contracts (including any relevant modifications, extensions, or renewals) awarded to, Indian economic enterprises, expressed by agency region;

“(C) a description of the percentage increase or decrease in total dollar value and number of purchases and awards made within each agency region, as compared to the totals of the region for the preceding fiscal year;

“(D) a description of the methods used by applicable contracting officers and employees to conduct market searches to identify qualified Indian economic enterprises;

“(E) a summary of all deviations granted under section 1480.403 of title 48, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), including a description of—

“(i) the types of alternative procurement methods used, including any Indian owned businesses reported under other procurement goals; and

“(ii) the dollar value of any awards made pursuant to those deviations;

“(F) a summary of all determinations made to provide awards to Indian economic enterprises, including a description of the dollar value of the awards;

“(G) a description or summary of the total number and value of all purchases of, and contracts awarded for, supplies, services, and construction (including the percentage increase or decrease, as compared to the preceding fiscal year) from—

“(i) Indian economic enterprises; and

“(ii) non-Indian economic enterprises;

“(H) any administrative, procedural, legal, or other barriers to achieving the purposes of this section, together with recommendations for legislative or administrative actions to address those barriers; and

“(I) for each agency region—

“(i) the total amount spent on purchases made from, and contracts awarded to, Indian economic enterprises; and

“(ii) a comparison of the amount described in clause (i) to the total amount that the agency region would likely have spent on the same purchases made from a non-Indian economic enterprise or contracts awarded to a non-Indian economic enterprise.

“(e) GOALS.—Each agency shall establish an annual minimum percentage goal for procurement in compliance with this section.”.

SEC. 5. NATIVE AMERICAN PROGRAMS ACT OF 1974.

(a) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR NATIVE AMERICAN PROJECTS.—Section 803 of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2991b) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) through (d) as subsections (c) through (e), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

“(b) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner may provide assistance under subsection (a) for projects relating to the purposes of this title

to a Native community development financial institution, as defined by the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(2) PRIORITY.—With regard to not less than 50 percent of the total amount available for assistance under this section, the Commissioner shall give priority to any application seeking assistance for—

“(A) the development of a Tribal code or court system for purposes of economic development, including commercial codes, training for court personnel, regulation pursuant to section 5 of the Act of August 15, 1876 (19 Stat. 200, chapter 289; 25 U.S.C. 261), and the development of nonprofit subsidiaries or other Tribal business structures;

“(B) the development of a community development financial institution, including training and administrative expenses; or

“(C) the development of a Tribal master plan for community and economic development and infrastructure.”

(b) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING.—

Section 804 of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2991c) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “The Commissioner” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) PRIORITY.—In providing assistance under subsection (a), the Commissioner shall give priority to any application described in section 803(b)(2).”.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

Section 816 of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2992d) is amended—

(1) by striking “803(d)” each place it appears and inserting “803(e)”; and

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “such sums as may be necessary” and inserting “\$34,000,000”; and

(B) by striking “1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002” and inserting “2021 through 2025”.

(d) CONFORMING AND TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.—The Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2991 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by striking “tribe” each place the term appears and inserting “Tribe”;

(2) by striking “tribes” each place the term appears and inserting “Tribes”; and

(3) by striking “tribal” each place the term appears and inserting “Tribal”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE) and the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Hawaii.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Hawaii?

There was no objection.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, S. 212, the Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act, amends current laws to provide industry and economic development opportunities to Indian communities.

Indian Tribes face many unique obstacles in their mission to bring industry and economic development to In-

dian Country. This includes geographic isolation, lack of infrastructure, and lack of sufficient collateral and capital. The end result is an increased cost of doing business in Indian Country, which stifles outside investment.

S. 212 seeks to address these issues by amending three existing Federal laws, the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000, the Buy Indian Act, and the Native American Programs Act of 1974.

These laws have been supporting Native businesses and economic development for years. However, they need to be updated to reflect the 21st century economy, as well as the realities in Indian Country today.

To that end, enactment of S. 212 will increase access to capital for Indian Tribes and businesses, increase opportunities for Indian business promotion, and create mechanisms and tools to address investments in Indian communities.

At the request of the Appropriations Committee, we are making some small changes to the current bill to update the fiscal year authorization language for some of the programs. This means that the bill will have to go back to the Senate, where I hope and believe they will move swiftly to enact it, as amended, before the end of this Congress.

□ 1745

I commend the sponsor of the bill, the chair of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Senator HOEVEN from North Dakota, for his work on this legislation.

I also recognize our own colleague, Representative NORMA TORRES from California for her work on the bill and for carrying the House companion, H.R. 1937.

I urge my colleagues to support S. 212, and I ask for its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
LABOR,

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, November 30, 2020.

Hon. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRIJALVA: I write concerning S. 212, the Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act of 2019. This bill was primarily referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and additionally to the Committee on Education and Labor. As a result of Leadership and the Committee on Natural Resources having consulted with me concerning this bill generally, I agree to forgo formal consideration of the bill so the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

The Committee on Education and Labor takes this action with our mutual understanding that by forgoing formal consideration of S. 212, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and we will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so we may address any remaining issues within our Rule X jurisdiction. I also request that you support my request to name members of

the Committee on Education and Labor to any conference committee to consider such provisions.

Finally, I would appreciate a response confirming this understanding and ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the committee report for S. 212 and in the Congressional Record during floor consideration thereof.

Sincerely,

ROBERT C. “BOBBY” SCOTT,
Chairman.

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, November 30, 2020.

Hon. BOBBY SCOTT,
Chair, Committee on Education and Labor,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR SCOTT: I write to you concerning S. 212, the “Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act of 2019.”

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this legislation. I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Education and Labor. I acknowledge that your Committee will not formally consider S. 212 and agree that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any future jurisdictional claim over the matters contained in the bill that fall within your Committee’s Rule X jurisdiction.

I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with you as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

RAÚL M. GRIJALVA,
Chair,
House Natural Resources Committee.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that, for decades, the Native American communities have struggled with a wide array of difficulties relating to economic development on their own land, including poor access to capital, remote and rural locations, and degradation of the local infrastructure. Only around half of all Native Americans residing or near Tribal communities have jobs, and a quarter of Native families earn an income that is below the American poverty line.

Tribal economic development is also hampered by the need for Federal approval before leasing of trust lands, legal systems that are not business friendly, and issues raised by sovereign immunity.

This bill, S. 212, amends three Federal laws relating to business, economic, and trade development in Indian communities: the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000, the Buy Indian Act, and the Native American Programs Act of 1974.

The amendments are intended to increase access to capital for Indian Tribes and businesses, increase opportunities for Indian business promotion, and create mechanisms and tools to attract investments in Indian communities.

Mr. Speaker, I fully support the intent behind this legislation and appre-

ciate the work that has gone into it over the last several years.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the comments of my colleague from Puerto Rico.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Miss GONZALEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today in support of the legislation before us, the “Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act,”—the Senate companion to my bill in the House.

For too long, lack of access to credit and community development have hampered the entrepreneurial spirit of Native American tribes. Yet, across the country, Native American entrepreneurs are ready to start new businesses, create jobs, and lift up their communities.

My bill is a first step to change that. It updates and provides new resources to the Department of Commerce’s Office of Native American Business Development. It ensures the Department of Health and Human Services is using Native American labor and industry products when appropriate. And, it authorizes the Administration for Native Americans to provide key financial assistance to Native American community development financial institutions.

I want to thank my friend Congresswoman HAALAND for co-leading this bill with me, and Senator HOEVEN, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, for introducing and shepherding this bill in the Senate.

The American people and Native communities, should be reassured that there is bipartisan commitment to improving lives in Indian Country.

I urge my colleagues, to vote yes and join us in empowering the Native American entrepreneurs and communities who are building solutions for a better tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 212, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COORDINATED OCEAN OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH ACT OF 2020

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 914) to reauthorize the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009, to clarify the authority of the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration with respect to post-storm assessments, and to require the establish-

ment of a National Water Center, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 914

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Coordinated Ocean Observations and Research Act of 2020”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—REAUTHORIZATION OF INTEGRATED COASTAL AND OCEAN OBSERVATION SYSTEM ACT OF 2009

Sec. 101. Purposes.

Sec. 102. Definitions.

Sec. 103. Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System.

Sec. 104. Financing and agreements.

Sec. 105. Reports to Congress.

Sec. 106. Public-private use policy.

Sec. 107. Repeal of independent cost estimate.

Sec. 108. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 109. Reports and research plans.

Sec. 110. Strategic research plan.

Sec. 111. Stakeholder input on monitoring.

Sec. 112. Research activities.

TITLE II—NAMED STORM EVENT MODEL AND POST-STORM ASSESSMENTS

Sec. 201. Named Storm Event Model and post-storm assessments.

TITLE III—WATER PREDICTION AND FORECASTING

Sec. 301. Water prediction and forecasting.

TITLE I—REAUTHORIZATION OF INTEGRATED COASTAL AND OCEAN OBSERVATION SYSTEM ACT OF 2009

SEC. 101. PURPOSES.

Section 12302 of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 (33 U.S.C. 3601) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 12302. PURPOSES.

“The purposes of this subtitle are—

“(1) to establish and sustain a national integrated System of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes observing systems, comprised of Federal and non-Federal components coordinated at the national level by the Council and at the regional level by a network of regional coastal observing systems, and that includes in situ, remote, and other coastal and ocean observation and modeling capabilities, technologies, data management systems, communication systems, and product development systems, and is designed to address regional and national needs for ocean and coastal information, to gather specific data on key ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes variables, and to ensure timely and sustained dissemination and availability of these data—

“(A) to the public;

“(B) to support national defense, search and rescue operations, marine commerce, navigation safety, weather, climate, and marine forecasting, energy siting and production, economic development, ecosystem-based marine, coastal, and Great Lakes resource management, public safety, and public outreach and education;

“(C) to promote greater public awareness and stewardship of the Nation’s ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources and the general public welfare;

“(D) to provide easy access to ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes data and promote data sharing between Federal and non-Federal sources and promote public data sharing;

“(E) to enable advances in scientific understanding to support the sustainable use, conservation, management, and understanding