



# Santa Ynez Valley Coalition

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June 11, 2018

## Executive Committee

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The Honorable John Hoeven, Chairman  
Committee on Indian Affairs  
United States Senate  
838 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Hoeven:

I write to urgently request that you take the immediate and necessary actions to ensure that H.R. 1491, the Santa Ynez legislation, does not proceed without addressing the significant consequences to the rights of private property owners not only in California but across the country.

The Chumash's Camp 4 trust acquisition is an abuse of the off-reservation fee-to-trust program. It is such an abuse that it paints the program in a bad light and could therefore compromise the program for future legitimate tribal needs. The Chumash's Camp 4 trust acquisition is a blatant attempt to circumvent local land use planning to ultimately fulfill the Tribe's long-sought desire to massively develop this 1,400-acre parcel of farmland and open space.

After the recent hearing on the bill, I acted on your suggestion that the Coalition and Tribe meet to "find some common ground" and sought direct engagement with Chairman Kahn. However, aside from a preliminary initial meeting, the Chairman and I have not been able to meet again to address the substantive outstanding issues that trouble our community mainly due to the Chairman's schedule. In fact, during a phone call with me yesterday, he cancelled our meeting tomorrow, June 7, on the premise that the outstanding issues we would have discussed have already been covered in public testimony. To be clear, Chairman Kahn is refusing to discuss the very issues on which you asked us to try and find common ground.

We now understand that the Tribe is continuing its lobbying efforts seeking this bill's passage in its current form and there is a possibility that it could be scheduled for markup in the coming weeks. I am hopeful that you will not allow this bill to proceed in its current form.

As I testified before the Committee, the Santa Ynez Valley Coalition supports the Tribe's efforts to address its housing and community facility needs. We think those issues can be resolved without the resulting loss of open spaces the County and City has long sought to preserve as well as the negative impacts to surrounding property owners that would arise from this bill.

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Much has been made of Santa Barbara County's "support" of H.R. 1491. However, it is essential to examine that the context of that support and whether it represents a meaningful agreement between the County and the Chumash given that our Supervisors publicly admitted they were negotiating the Memorandum of Agreement they signed under duress.

Before last year, Santa Barbara County was a staunch opponent of both the redevelopment of this land at all and the Camp 4 fee to trust application. In fact, the County was so vehemently opposed it testified in opposition to similar legislation in the previous Congress and filed both administrative and judicial challenges against the BIA Camp 4 fee to trust decision.

In the fall of last year, all of that changed. As the Board Chair repeatedly stated during several public meetings in 2017, House Congressional leaders effectively demanded that the County sign an agreement with the Tribe or they would enact H.R. 1491 with few restrictions on the Tribe's use of Camp 4. Hence, the County was forced to accept a deal of far too limited duration, with anemic payments for utilities and other infrastructure related to Camp 4 that is a fraction of their actual cost and which would in no way replace the lost tax revenue from the parcel being placed into trust.

If the Tribe is true to its commitment that it ONLY intends to use Camp 4 for tribal housing and a community facility, it should be willing to extend the land use restrictions beyond 2040. We hope, at a minimum, that the Committee will amend the bill accordingly. Attached is draft amendment language for your consideration, which makes the agreed to restriction on the land for housing and the community center permanent unless changed by Congress in the future.

There are other issues we would like addressed with the bill and we still hope to engage with the Tribe on them consistent with your suggestions. We believe that your exhortation to us to meet with the Tribe and try and work things out was sincere. However we have been rebuffed in our efforts to heed your advice and now our community is at great risk. We implore you to help us preserve some balance in this bill despite the Tribe's resistance to do the same.

Should you have any questions or need further information, feel free to call me at 805-245-3660 or our representative in Washington, Kevin Kelly, at 202-236-1812.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bill Krauch, Chair  
Santa Ynez Valley Coalition

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