

Turkish-Native American Investment Bill Passes House Committee

On November 17, the House Committee on Natural Resources voted 27-15 to pass the Indian Tribal Trade and Investment Act, H.R. 2362, which will now be reported favorably to the House for a final vote.

“For the last two years,” said G. Lincoln McCurdy, TCA President, “Turkey and Native American tribes have been developing a unique international relationship that promises to help create jobs and spur economic development in both Indian Country and Turkey. The Natural Resources Committee vote supports sound policy and respects the economic interests of Native American tribes. This is a historic step forward and we hope that this legislation will pass before the end of the year and will begin making a positive difference in 2012.”

Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs, championed the bill during the committee markup, telling committee members that as Native American tribes are sovereign nations within a sovereign nation, they should be allowed to choose their business partners. Opponents of the bill, particularly Rep. John Sarbanes (D-Md.) and Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.), initially claimed that their opposition stemmed from a desire to avoid singling out any country for special treatment, against which bill supporters successfully argued that Turkey and Turkish companies were the only foreign entities to express an interest in working with Native American tribes, and that if the pilot program is successful, it could easily be expanded to include other countries.

H.R. 2362, if passed by the full House, will establish a limited demonstration project that will authorize up to six tribes or tribal consortia to partner with Turkish companies to establish commercial ties without requiring federal government approval. Turkish companies’ interest in working with Indian Country, coupled with their strengths in construction, uniquely positions them to help spur private-sector economic growth and create jobs. The activities authorized by the legislation would be funded by private-sector entities, without any expenditure of federal funds.

For more information and to read the TCA testimony on the Bill, please visit www.tc-america.org

Washington, DC

1510 H Street, NW, # 900
Washington DC 20005
Phone: 202.370.1399
Fax: 202.370.1398

Boston

48 Jonas Brown Circle
Concord, MA 01742
Phone: 978.318.0047
Fax: 978.318.0037

Istanbul

Cumhuriyet Cad. No: 17/1
Taksim, Istanbul 34437
Phone: (+90) 212.297.9580
Fax: (+90) 212.297.4039

Turkish Coalition of America
www.tc-america.org