

**TESTIMONY OF
MICHAEL S. BLACK
DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS
ON
H.R. 726, TO AMEND THE GRAND RONDE RESERVATION ACT**

JULY 24, 2012

Chairman Young, Ranking Member Lujan, and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Michael Black and I am the Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Administration's views on H.R. 726, a bill to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to make technical corrections, and for other purposes. The Department of the Interior (Department) supports H.R. 726.

Taking land into trust is one of the most important functions that the Department undertakes on behalf of Indian tribes. Homelands are essential to the health, safety, and welfare of the tribal governments. Thus, the Department has made the restoration of tribal homelands a priority.

H.R. 726 amends an Act to establish a reservation for the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, Pub. L. No. 100-425 (Sept. 9, 1988), to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to place in trust approximately 288 acres of real property located within the boundaries of the original 1857 reservation of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon if the real property is conveyed or otherwise transferred to the United States by or on behalf of the Tribe. Furthermore, the bill provides that the Secretary is to treat all applications to take land into trust within the boundaries of the original 1857 reservation as an on-reservation trust acquisition, and that all real property taken into trust within those boundaries after September 9, 1988, are to be considered part of the Tribe's reservation.

Again, the Department supports H.R. 726. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on H.R. 726. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.