

**TESTIMONY OF
MIKE SMITH
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
ON
S. 818, TO AMEND THE GRAND RONDE RESERVATION ACT**

OCTOBER 7, 2015

Chairman Barrasso, Vice Chairman Tester, and Members of the Committee, my name is Michael Smith and I am the Deputy Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the Department of the Interior (Department). Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department's views on S. 818, a bill to amend the Grand Ronde Reservation Act to make technical corrections, and for other purposes. The Department supports S. 818.

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.

S. 818 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 1,038 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 S. 818. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on S. 818. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.