



AIANTA
American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bill to Empower Native Communities & Expand Cultural Tourism Opportunities Introduced in House

National and local tourism industry applauds introduction of the NATIVE Act of 2015

Washington D.C. (September 23, 2015) - Last week, Congresswoman Dina Titus (NV) and Congressman Markwayne Mullin (OK) co-sponsored the introduction of a bill to create jobs and support businesses in Native American and Alaska Native communities. Congressman Don Young (AK) has also signed on as a co-sponsor on the recent introduction. The bill, the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act (H.R. 3477) integrates Native American tourism with federal United States tourism initiatives to promote the cultural assets of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

The introduction of the bill received support from the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association's (AIANTA) Board of Directors.

"AIANTA applauds the leadership of Congresswoman Titus, Congressman Mullin and Congressman Young for the introduction of the NATIVE Act in the House," said Sherry L. Rupert, AIANTA board president. "AIANTA strongly supports the goals of the NATIVE Act, because it will ensure that tribes are included in existing federal tourism programs and present opportunities to build capacity and infrastructure in Native communities, advance economic development and create new jobs."

Rupert also serves as the Executive Director of the State of Nevada Indian Commission, and sits on the prestigious U.S. Department of Commerce Travel and Tourism Advisory Board (US TTAB).

"The NATIVE Act will help to advance tourism's potential to improve the lives of remote and well-known tribes in Alaska, while also supporting and expanding Indian Country tourism throughout the country," said Rachel Moreno, AIANTA board vice president and vice chair of the Sitka Tribal Council.

The bill would require federal agencies with recreational travel and tourism functions to include Indian tribes and tribal organizations in updated management plans and develop Native American tourism plans to improve travel and tourism data collection and analysis, increase integration of federal assets and support national tourism goals.



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About AIANTA:

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit association of American Indian tribes, tribal tourism, cultural and private sector representatives, representatives from the tourism industry, Federal, State and local governments, colleges and universities, and friends that was incorporated in 2002 to advance Indian Country tourism. The association is made up of representatives from six regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains and the Southwest. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian tourism that honors traditions and values.

The purpose of the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association is to provide our constituents with the voice and tools needed to advance tourism while helping tribes, tribal organizations and tribal members create infrastructure and capacity through technical assistance, training and educational resources. AIANTA serves as the liaison among Indian Country, governmental, educational and private entities for the development, growth, and sustenance of Indian Country tourism. By developing and implementing programs and facilitating economic development opportunities, the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association helps tribes build for their future while sustaining and strengthening their cultural legacy.

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