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**Committee on Natural Resources**  
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**Opening Statement of**  
**Chairman Don Young**  
**Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs**  
**On Thursday May, 16, 2013**  
**1324 Longworth House Office Building Subcommittee Legislative Hearing on**  
**H.R. 623 (Young of AK), H.R. 740 (Young of AK), H.R. 841 (Schrader), H.R. 931(Schrader), H.R. 1306**  
**(Young of AK), H.R. 1410 (Franks)**

The six bills on the hearing agenda today resolve a variety of land-related issues affecting tribes in Oregon and Arizona, an Alaska Native health provider, and a Native Regional Corporation. The sponsors represent the district of lands affected by their bills and therefore the legislation is an important constituent service for them.

H.R. 740, a bill I introduced with Ranking Member Hanabusa, will authorize Sealaska, the regional Alaska Native Corporation for Southeast Alaska, to finalize its 40-year old land settlement due under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971 by selecting Native lands from within a designated pool of land in Southeast Alaska.

First introduced over six years ago, this bill has undergone an extensive vetting process throughout the region that has resulted in meaningful changes such as providing for continued public access to lands, and modifying certain land selections, among others.

In addition, the legislation allows Sealaska to move away from sensitive watersheds, to select a more balanced inventory of second growth and old growth, and to select most of its remaining ANCSA lands on the existing road system, preserving on balance as much as 40,000 acres of inventoried "roadless old growth."

Further, Southeast Alaska communities face dire economic realities. Some communities have unemployment nearing 50% and many more are in the double digits. It was not always this way, but through the mismanagement of the forest by the Forest Service and the continued siege from environmental groups, industry has suffered and, over the last couple decades, the population has seen a consistent and steep decline.

By permitting Sealaska to select its remaining entitlement lands from outside of the withdrawal boxes, the Sealaska bill would help Sealaska maintain jobs in rural and predominately Native

communities. Sealaska provides hundreds of jobs and is the largest private employer in the entire region.

After nearly 40 years since the passage of ANCSA, Sealaska has still not received conveyance of its full land entitlement. It is critical that Sealaska complete its remaining land entitlement under ANCSA in order to continue to meet the economic, social and cultural needs of its Native shareholders, and the Native community throughout Alaska.

The hearing agenda includes several other bills. H.R. 1306 is an interim measure to sustain Sealaska's timber program until H.R. 740 can be enacted into law.

H.R. 623 provides for a small conveyance of land for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium to carry out its valuable medical services for Alaska Native people.

H.R. 841 and H.R. 931 are sponsored by Congressman Schrader of Oregon, to provide a smoother process for the Department of the Interior to process trust land applications filed by two tribes in his district.

And finally, H.R. 1410 is a modified version of a bill passed by an overwhelming majority of the House last year, to prohibit additional Indian casinos in the Phoenix area in accordance with guarantees made by Arizona's Indian tribes when the tribal-state compact was ratified.