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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

Opening Statement of
Chairman Don Young
Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs
House Natural Resources Committee
At the Legislative Hearing on H.R. 205 and H.R. 2362
November 3, 2011

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The purpose of today's hearing is to hear testimony on H.R. 205, a bill sponsored by Martin Heinrich and H.R. 2362, a bill introduced by Tom Cole.

Over the years, we continue to hear from tribes that it can take months and in some cases years to approve simple lease agreements at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. These long delays hurt the tribe's ability to spur economic development and create jobs. Both of these bills will help tribal governments cut through the bureaucratic red tape and allow the tribes to lease their lands without approval of the Secretary of the Interior, pursuant to tribal regulations approved by the Secretary.

H.R. 205, entitled the "HEARTH Act of 2011," amends the Long Term Indian Leasing Act, so that tribes can lease their lands for any non-mineral development. And H.R. 2362, the "Indian Tribal Trade and Investment Demonstration Project Act of 2011," creates a pilot project for tribes to participate in economic and business development with private entities from the Republic of Turkey. Both bills have support from Indian Country and I look forward to hearing the testimony from our witnesses. If there is no objection, I would like to add the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey's letter in support of H.R. 2362.