

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS  
ON  
S. 2796, A BILL TO REPEAL CERTAIN OBSOLETE LAWS RELATING TO INDIANS**

**JUNE 29, 2016**

Chairman Barrasso, Vice-Chairman Tester, and members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to express the views of the Department of the Interior (Department) on S. 2796, a bill to repeal certain obsolete laws relating to Indians. The Department understands the need to repeal certain laws relating to Indian that were passed by Congress in the late 1800s. The Department supports S. 2796.

**S. 2796**

S. 2796 would repeal various laws that were passed by Congress during periods in United States Federal Government history that were directly related to the federal government's policy with Indian tribes. The laws to be repealed by S. 2796 range in dates of enactment from 1862 through 1913, and were passed in the eras of Federal Indian policy identified as "removal and reservations (1829–86), and allotment and assimilation (1887-1932)" eras. The language in many of these laws uses historical and antiquated terms and contexts such as "Indian tribe is in actual hostility to the United States," or "while at war with the United States," or "Moneys or annuities of hostile Indians" and "withholding of moneys or goods on account of intoxicating liquors." These various laws were passed with the sole purpose of prescribing the appropriation of moneys or annuities on the condition of "non-hostility" with the United States, or not to be "under the influence [] of intoxicating liquors," or withholding such appropriations to Indian tribes for Indian children not attending schools. The Department agrees that these laws should be repealed.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Department's views on S. 2796. I am available to answer any questions the Committee may have.