

**Statement for the Record**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
**House Natural Resources Subcommittee**  
**on Indian, Insular, and Alaska Native Affairs**  
**on**  
**H.R. 231, Canyon Village Land Conveyance Act**  
**February 6, 2018**

Thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 231, the Canyon Village Land Conveyance Act. H.R. 231 amends the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) and directs the Secretary of the Interior to convey interests to fulfill Canyon Village's entitlement under ANCSA. The Department supports this legislation and would like to work with the sponsor on technical modifications regarding the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980.

**Background**

ANCSA settled aboriginal land claims in Alaska and entitled Alaska Native communities to receive title to 46 million acres. ANCSA established a corporate structure for Native land ownership in Alaska under which Alaska Natives would become shareholders in up to two private, for-profit, land-owning corporations, a regional corporation and a village corporation. Twelve regional corporations were established, each covering a specific geographic area of Alaska, and within those regions, village corporations were established for each Native community. More than 220 village corporations received acreage entitlements through which they could select and receive ownership of Federal lands.

In 1971, Congress included Canyon Village as a named village corporation under ANCSA, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs certified Canyon Village as an Alaska Native group eligible for lands and benefits under ANCSA. In 1976, the corporation filed its land selection application for approximately 6,040 acres. The selected lands are within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge established by ANILCA (but not in the area defined in Section 1002 as potentially available for oil and gas development) and are thus unavailable for conveyance under existing law.

**H.R. 231**

The bill amends ANCSA, directing the Secretary to convey the surface estate in selected lands to Kian Tr'ee Corporation for the Native village of Canyon Village. The bill also directs the Secretary to convey the subsurface rights for the selected lands to Doyon, Limited, an Alaska Native regional corporation or, at Doyon's choice, alternative subsurface estate, to fulfill ANCSA entitlements.

**Conclusion**

The Department supports H.R. 231 and looks forward to working with the sponsor as the bill moves through the legislative process.