

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 277

To take certain land located in San Diego County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Pala Band of Mission Indians, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 7, 2023

Mr. PADILLA introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs

A BILL

To take certain land located in San Diego County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Pala Band of Mission Indians, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Pala Band of Mission
5 Indians Land Transfer Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. TRANSFER OF LAND INTO TRUST FOR THE PALA**
7 **BAND OF MISSION INDIANS.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
10 the Secretary of the Interior.

1 (2) TRIBE.—The term “Tribe” means the Pala
2 Band of Mission Indians.

3 (b) TRANSFER AND ADMINISTRATION.—

4 (1) TRANSFER OF LAND INTO TRUST.—If, not
5 later than 180 days after the date of enactment of
6 this Act, the Tribe transfers title to the land re-
7 ferred to in subsection (c) to the United States, the
8 Secretary, not later than 180 days after the date of
9 that transfer, shall take that land into trust for the
10 benefit of the Tribe.

11 (2) ADMINISTRATION.—The land taken into
12 trust under paragraph (1) shall be part of the Pala
13 Indian Reservation and administered in accordance
14 with the laws and regulations generally applicable to
15 land held in trust by the United States for an Indian
16 Tribe.

17 (c) LAND DESCRIPTION.—The land referred to in
18 subsection (b)(1) is the approximately 721.12 acres of
19 land located in San Diego County, California, generally
20 depicted as “Gregory Canyon Property Boundary” on the
21 map entitled “Pala Gregory Canyon Property Boundary
22 and Parcels” and dated May 12, 2020.

23 (d) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
24 tion—

1 (1) enlarges, impairs, or otherwise affects any
2 right or claim of the Tribe to any land or interest
3 in land that is in existence before the date of enact-
4 ment of this Act;

5 (2) affects any water right of the Tribe in exist-
6 ence before the date of enactment of this Act; or

7 (3) terminates or limits any access in any way
8 to any right-of-way or right-of-use issued, granted,
9 or permitted before the date of enactment of this
10 Act.

11 (e) RESTRICTED USE OF TRANSFERRED LANDS.—
12 The Tribe may not conduct, on the land taken into trust
13 under subsection (b)(1), gaming activities—

14 (1) as a matter of claimed inherent authority;
15 or

16 (2) under any Federal law, including the Indian
17 Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.)
18 and regulations promulgated by the Secretary or the
19 National Indian Gaming Commission under that
20 Act.

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