



Committee on Natural Resources

Rep. Nick J. Rahall, II - Chairman

1324 Longworth House Office Building - Washington DC, 20515 - <http://resourcescommittee.house.gov>

H.R. 2176 & H.R. 4115
Bills to provide for and approve the
settlement of certain land claims of the
Bay Mills Indian Community (Stupak, D-MI)
and the
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa (Dingell, D-MI)
June 2008

H.R. 2176 and H.R. 4115 would settle longstanding claims by the Bay Mills Indian Community and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa against land located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan by providing land elsewhere in the State of Michigan.

Over 150 years ago, land was illegally taken from the Bay Mills and Sault Ste. Marie tribes. These actions eventually led the tribes to file land claims against the property owners in Charlotte Beach, Michigan. These claims have resulted in years of litigation, clouded title for hundreds of private property owners, and the denial of the sovereign rights of two Indian tribes.

The parties have worked to develop settlement agreements that require the tribes to give up their land claims in the Charlotte Beach area in return for replacement lands elsewhere in Michigan. These replacement lands are in communities selected by the State of Michigan. Before the settlement agreements were finalized, communities located within the replacement lands voted by referendum to support the settlement package. It is expected that Indian gaming would occur on these replacement lands.

Former Republican Governor John Engler and current Democratic Governor Jennifer Granholm have been instrumental in reaching the settlement agreements referenced in H.R. 2176 and H.R. 4115. In addition, the legislation is endorsed by United States Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow, both Indian tribes, all of the communities involved, and their state and local elected officials. Most importantly, they are supported by the very Members of Congress whose districts are directly impacted by the legislation Rep. Bart Stupak, Rep. John Dingell, and Rep. Candice Miller.