

(4) The extent to which aboriginal titles in Alaska should be recognized or extinguished is exclusively a policy matter for congressional determination. Congress may convert the aboriginal titles into full ownership, or it may extinguish the titles completely, or it may recognize the titles to a limited extent.

In the other States, Congress followed the practice of confirming some aboriginal Indian titles and of extinguishing others by treaty or agreement. Then by the Indian Claims Commission Act Congress authorized any Indian tribe to sue the United States for the value of any aboriginal Indian title that was taken before August 13, 1946, without fair compensation. In Alaska, however, Congress has reserved for future legislation the recognition of, or compensation for the taking of, Native titles. The enactment of this bill would be such legislation.

The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to grant to the various groups of Alaska Natives title to the village sites they occupy, and additional lands within the environs of those sites that will contribute significantly to the livelihood of the Natives, but no group may receive more than 50,000 acres. In addition, Natives may be given 25-year exclusive or nonexclusive hunting, fishing, and trapping permits on any Federal lands, subject to State game and fish laws.

Title to the lands granted to a group of Natives may be held in trust for 25 years either by the Secretary, by a trustee selected by the Native group, with the approval of the Secretary, or by the State of Alaska or other trustee selected by the Secretary.

The trustee may manage, subdivide, and dispose of the lands. In the disposal of lands, the right of first refusal must be given to the occupant. Title to a tract that is conveyed to a Native will be held in trust, not subject to taxation, in accordance with the laws that presently apply to Native townsites.

At the end of 25 years, the trust must be liquidated in accordance with the terms of the trust instrument.

No No
No
No
No
No