(Address)

(Date)

The Honorable (Full Name)

200 West Washington Street

Indianapolis, Indiana

46204

**Re: Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership (HEARTH) Act (H.R. 205)**

Dear (Senator or Representative):

My name is (Full Name) and I am a member of the (Enter Tribe) in (State). I currently serve as the (Job Title) for the (Tribe or Organization). I am writing to express my support for the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership or HEARTH Act – H.R. 205.

Introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Martin Heinrich, the HEARTH Act would amend the Indian Long-Term Leasing Act of 1955 and allow tribes to assume control over surface site leasing in Indian Country. For too many years, the cumbersome process of the Bureau of Indian Affairs within the Department of the Interior (DOI) and, ultimately, the requirement of Secretarial approval of tribal leases have delayed important housing, business, and economic development projects. It is not uncommon for DOI to take more than two years to approve a tribal surface site lease for a housing or similar project.

The HEARTH Act will permit tribes to develop their own leasing regulations and, once such regulations are approved by the Secretary of the Interior, assume control over the surface site leasing process. Tribes will be able to review and approve or disapprove leases faster under this system, and it will enhance tribal self-determination and self-governance as the tribe, not the federal government, will be the decision maker when it comes to surface land leases.

In order to further the federal government’s policy goals of tribal self-determination and self-government, tribal control over surface site leasing in Indian Country is essential. Passage of the HEARTH Act (H.R. 205) would be a powerful step in the right direction. I respectfully request that you help move this important piece of legislation forward for your constituents in Indian Country. I ask for your support of the HEARTH Act and that you consider signing on as a cosponsor to this important piece of legislation.

I look forward to working with your office on this and other tribal housing-related legislation and issues. Thank you in advance for your support of the HEARTH Act.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

(Job Title)