

REPRESENTATIVE MARTIN HEINRICH (NM-01)  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HEINRICH INTRODUCES HEARTH ACT**

*Bill Would Remove Obstacles to Homeownership for Native American Families*

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Representative Martin Heinrich (NM-01) today introduced legislation to remove barriers between Native American families and homeownership. The Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership (HEARTH) Act would expedite the lease approval process by allowing tribal governments to approve trust land leases and submit them directly to the Secretary of the Interior. The HEARTH Act would remove existing bureaucratic and time obstacles prospective Native American home owners encounter when seeking approval from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to buy a home on tribal land.

"We can put the dream of owning a home on tribal land within reach of Native families," said Rep. Heinrich. "This bill would cut through bureaucratic red tape and open doors to homeownership for Native American families in New Mexico and across the country."

Currently, before Native families can close on the sale of a house, they need approval from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to lease the land the house is built on. That approval can take between six months and two years. A seller is rarely able to wait two years to sell their house and banks are often unable to hold a mortgage approval for that long. This delay often results in a family deciding to move off tribal land because it's the only way they can own a house, even when they would rather stay in the community where their family has lived for generations.

Zuni Pueblo Governor Norman Coeoyate said, "This legislation provides more of our tribal community members the chance to achieve the dream of their fellow Americans: home ownership. Access to new financial services on tribal land reduces the financial burden on our families and breaks down barriers to keeping our community intact."

"With this legislation, Representative Heinrich has shown his commitment to reforming Federal laws in a manner that respects tribal authority and decision-making. This is good legislation that improves the delivery of housing assistance and related economic development to meet the needs of Indian Country," said Marty Shuravloff, Chairman of the National American Indian

Housing Council. "We heard from our members that they need these reforms and we are committed to seeing this bill signed into law this year."



**[Watch Rep. Heinrich introduce the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership \(HEARTH\) Act on the House floor, by visiting his YouTube channel.](#)**

You can also embed the video on your site by copying and pasting this code:

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