
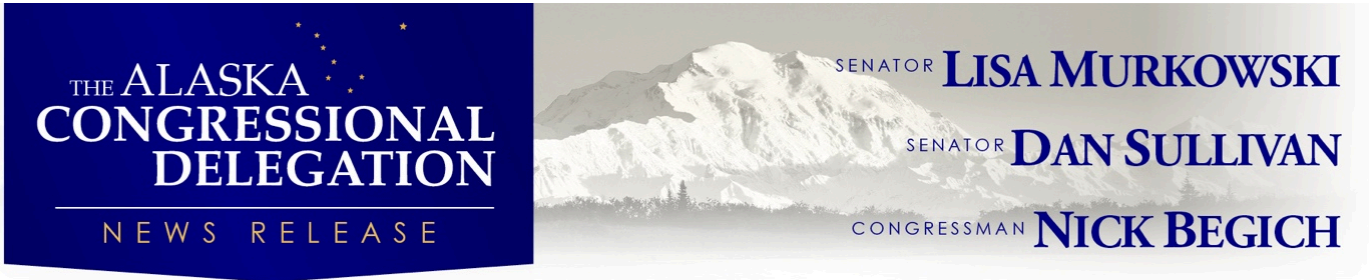


Senate Passes 5-Year Extension for Alaska Native Vietnam-era Veterans Land Allotment Program

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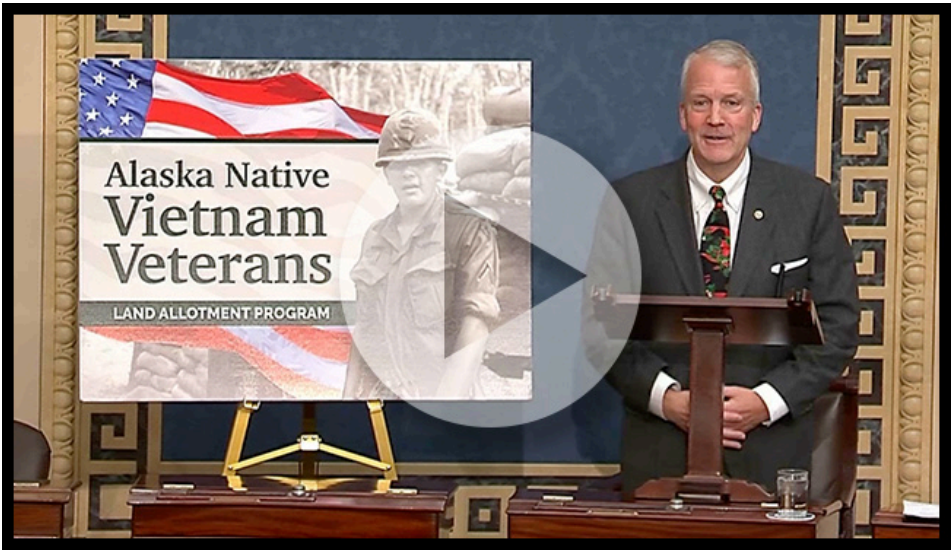


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Senate Passes 5-Year Extension for Alaska Native Vietnam-era Veterans Land Allotment Program

WASHINGTON—U.S. Senators Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski, and Congressman Nick Begich (all R-Alaska), thanked their Senate colleagues today for passing legislation to extend the Alaska Native Vietnam Veteran Land Allotment Program for an additional five years just days before the application period for the program was set to expire. The legislation, [shepherded through the House](#) by Congressman Begich in July, now heads to the President's desk for his signature.



Click [here](#) or the image above to watch Sen. Sullivan's remarks.

"Tonight, the Senate was able to deliver a Christmas gift for some great American heroes—our Alaska Native Vietnam-era veterans," **said Sen. Sullivan.** "Just days before the application period for this program was set to expire, my colleagues and I came together this evening to pass a five-year extension that grants these incredible veterans a renewed opportunity to apply for their congressionally mandated land allotments that many missed due to their service to our country overseas. We've faced many hurdles since we got my provision into law in 2019, especially the Biden administration's four years of delays and red tape that led to just roughly 40 veterans receiving their allotments out of several thousand eligible. I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for working with me and my delegation colleagues to get this done right at the buzzer. Now, our work continues to get these heroes, or their heirs, the land allotments that they deserve."

"For decades, Alaska Native veterans who served our nation during the Vietnam era have sought their rightful land allotments. When we re-established this program in 2019 through the Dingell Act, we hoped that thousands of eligible individuals and heirs would finally receive the lands they are owed in short order. Unfortunately, BLM has certificated just six percent of the applications it has received, and hundreds more veterans have not yet applied, compelling us to extend this program for another five years," **Sen. Murkowski said.** "Thankfully, as a result of the bill we passed today, there should be no lapse in these veterans' ability to apply for allotments. I also want to recognize that this measure didn't just move on its own—Senator Sullivan has worked tirelessly for months to address concerns and clear holds so that it could pass before the application deadline arrives."

"The passage of the Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans Land Allotment Extension Act marks an important milestone for the brave veterans who served our nation during the Vietnam War," **said Congressman Begich.** "Extending this important program honors their service and upholds our promise to those who selflessly served. I want to sincerely thank Senators Sullivan and Murkowski for their leadership in the Senate to get this bill across the finish line and to the President's desk. Today is a good day for Alaska and a great day for our veterans."

Today, several Alaska Native and veterans leaders [sent a letter](#) to Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-S.D.) stressing the importance of passing this legislation and renewing the application period for the allotment program before the end of the year.

Below is a timeline of Senator Sullivan and the Alaska congressional delegation's work on the Alaska Native veteran land allotment issue.

- In 1906, Congress passed a law allowing Alaska Native individuals to acquire 160-acre parcels of land.
- In 1971, at a time when many Alaska Native men were serving in the military during the Vietnam War, the *Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act* (ANCSA) extinguished the 1906 allotment rights.
- In 1998, the Alaska congressional delegation secured legislation to partially fix the injustice of Alaska Native veterans who missed the chance to apply for an allotment. However, due to certain restrictions, only about 500 veterans ultimately applied out more than 3,000 who were eligible.
- On February 12, 2019, the Senate passed Sen. Murkowski's [S.47, the National Resources Management Act](#), including a Sullivan provision to establish the Alaska Native Vietnam Veteran Land Allotment Program. The late Congressman Don Young (R-Alaska) shepherded the legislation through the House.
- On March 12, 2019, President Donald Trump signed S.47, and the Trump administration began working on its implementation.
- In January 2021, then-Interior Secretary David Bernhardt signed the revocation of 11 outdated public land orders (PLOs) issued in 1972 and 1973 that were put in place to allow Alaska Native Corporations to select lands promised to them by Congress 50 years ago. This important step allowed for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to revoke the PLOs.
- In 2021, Sen. Sullivan met twice with Congresswoman Deb Haaland (D-N.M.) prior to her confirmation vote to be the next Secretary of the Interior. In both meetings, she committed to rapidly implement the Alaska Native Vietnam Veteran Land Allotment Program. She subsequently refused to follow through on this commitment.
- In February of 2021, members of the Alaska congressional delegation condemned the Biden administration Department of the Interior's (DOI) action to postpone the revocation of [PLOs signed by former Interior Secretary Bernhardt](#).
- In April of 2021, in a unilateral and unnecessary action, the BLM postponed the PLO revocations, requiring further environmental analysis on five PLOs with a two-year stay on the implementation of the PLO revocations.
- On May 7, 2021, Sen. Sullivan and Gov. Mike Dunleavy (R-Alaska) [penned an op-ed](#) in the Juneau Empire outlining the State of Alaska's legislative effort to make state lands available to eligible Alaska Native veterans.
- In June of 2021, Sens. Sullivan and Murkowski [introduced legislation](#) to amend the Alaska Native Vietnam Veteran Land Allotment Program and make an additional 3.7 million acres of federal land in the National Wildlife Refuge System available for selection.
- On April 18, 2022, Sens. Sullivan and Murkowski [sent a letter](#) to Secretary Haaland urging her to lift the PLOs that would make over 28 million acres of federal land available for selection by eligible veterans or their heirs.
- On April 21, 2022, Sen. Sullivan [disputed Secretary Haaland's claim](#) that she is "[moving] expeditiously to deliver on [her] promise" to Alaska Native Vietnam-era veterans as she accepted a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) from the acting Alaska BLM director on the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Alaska Native Vietnam Veteran Land Allotment Program.
- In February of 2023, Sens. Sullivan and Murkowski [reintroduced S.175](#), legislation to codify the revocation of the five PLOs signed during the Trump administration and to undo the Biden administration's efforts to unfairly halt access to federal public lands in Alaska.
- In April of 2023, Sen. Sullivan [condemned](#) Secretary Haaland's decision to order a new full environmental impact statement (EIS), which delayed the implementation of the allotment program even further.
- On August 10, 2023, Sen. Sullivan [criticized](#) Secretary Haaland's announcement of a PLO to open about 812,000 additional acres of public lands managed by BLM Alaska for selection, noting that the "new" land has already been spoken for by the State of Alaska, and the decision will result in more delays and legal hurdles for eligible veterans.
- In February of 2024, Sens. Sullivan and Murkowski introduced [S.3790](#), which would extend the program's application period for another five years before its expiration in December of 2025. The bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent on the final day of the 118th Congress, but did not clear the House of Representatives.
- On July 3, 2024, Sens. Sullivan and Murkowski [criticized](#) the BLM after it released a final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) recommending the revocation of five PLOs signed in January 2021, an action that restricted the transfer of certain selected lands to Alaska Native Vietnam-era veterans.
- In March of 2025, Sens. Sullivan and Murkowski [reintroduced legislation](#) to extend the application period for the Alaska Native Vietnam Veteran Land Allotment Program for five additional years.
- On July 14, 2025, the House [passed](#) Congressman Begich's version of the extension legislation.
- On October 8, 2025, Sen. Sullivan [attempted to pass](#) the extension legislation on the Senate floor, but it was blocked by Senate Democrats.
- On November 19, 2025, Sen. Sullivan [attempted to pass](#) the extension legislation on the Senate floor, but it was blocked by Senate Democrats.

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