

**GOVERNOR'S PROGRAM BILL
2023**

MEMORANDUM

An act in relation to settlement of certain
land claims

Purpose:

In 1982, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe initiated litigation with Franklin County, St. Lawrence County, and the State of New York to settle a dispute over who was the rightful owner of certain land located within those two counties. After many years of negotiations, the parties have reached a settlement agreement. This legislation would provide the Governor with the authorization needed to enter into this long-awaited settlement agreement.

Summary of Provisions:

Section one of the bill provides the Governor with the authorization to enter into a settlement agreement with the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe. The settlement agreement must be consistent with both a memorandum of understanding between the Governor, the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, and the county of St. Lawrence, and a resolution adopted by the county of Franklin on June 5, 2023.

This section also provides that the settlement agreement will be deemed ratified by the Legislature upon the certification by the Governor to the Temporary President of the Senate, the Speaker of the Assembly, and the Secretary of State that the agreement has received the requisite federal approvals and that the underlying litigation has been dismissed with prejudice.

Section two of the bill would make it take effect immediately.

Existing Law:

This legislation is a special act. As such, there is no existing provision of law that is being amended.

Justification:

To enter into a settlement agreement with a sovereign nation, the Governor needs the authorization of the Legislature. This legislation both authorizes the Governor to enter into the settlement agreement and constitutes the Legislature's acceptance of such settlement agreement upon the certification by the Governor that federal approval has been received.

PROGRAM BILL #12

Legislative History:

There is no legislative history on this bill.

Budget Implications:

There are no budget implications to this bill.

Effective Date:

This bill would take effect immediately.