

## *Passing: H.R. 5811 Tigua Blood Quantum Bill*

In 1987,  
the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo  
Restoration Act was passed.  
The Act allowed the Pueblo to assert  
its powers as a Tribal Nation. The Act also limited  
Tigua membership blood quantum. The Act allowed the  
Pueblo to build a better nation, but also denied several children their  
legacy and disregarded future generations. The Pueblo acted  
on behalf of those that were negated their  
Tigua heritage. The Blood Quantum bill was  
passed and the impact will have far  
reaching implications for  
the Tigua of today and the Tigua  
of tomorrow.



# Identity

The tribal journey and struggle to defend the Tigua “Identity” started at the Pueblo revolt of 1680 which resulted in the tribe’s migration to and establishment of Ysleta del Sur Pueblo 1682. The Tigua of Ysleta del Sur Pueblo survived despite external influences that forced transition over which the Pueblo had little control over. The changes in governing authorities rendered the community landless, poverty stricken and vulnerable. Rich in culture, spirituality and a long standing sense of community, the Tigua remained true to the “abuelos” and preserved and retained its Pueblo identity.

The fact that the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo survived demonstrates the will and spirit of the Tigua people to endure, grow and prosper. In spite of adversity, the Pueblo has been determined to preserve and continue the Tigua way of life and flourish as a community.

A Native Nation should have the right to determine for itself who is a tribal member. However, this hasn’t always been the case for the Pueblo. In 1987, when YDSP was restored by United States, the language in the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo Restoration Act, limited membership to tribal members with 1/8 degree or more blood quantum. Tribal offspring who did not meet blood quantum criteria set by the U.S. government were unable to retain full rights as a Tigua.

However, for the Tigua “Identity” is not tied to blood quantum. Tigua identity stems from culture, traditions, ceremony, values and community. It is a set of Tigua beliefs shared and practiced by Tiguas since the beginning of the Tigua way of life. Tiguas know that they have a responsibility to the Pueblo to be an active participant of Tigua traditional ways so that tradition and culture is preserved and continued to be practiced.



## Native American Citizenship

*"We come from a long line of strong and powerful Indian leaders: Chief Sitting Bull, Tecumseh, Vine Deloria Jr., Ira Hayes and innumerable others who have made it possible for us to be here together today. Their battles, their sacrifices, and their intelligence made possible the legacy we have inherited. We have an obligation to build upon their accomplishments and further the legacy that we will leave for our children and grandchildren."*

Joe Garcia, National Congress for Native Americans



## Tigua Citizenship

*"It is an internal insult. We don't measure being a Native American or a citizen of this pueblo based only on blood. It's based on who you are and your involvement with the community."*

Lt. Gov. Carlos Hisa Ysleta del Sur Pueblo



# Blood Quantum

- Blood Quantum was introduced by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Today, the Blood Quantum method is still common among tribes to determine Native Nation citizenship.
- Requirements for tribal citizenship are determined by tribes and vary from tribe-to-tribe.
- Generally, tribal membership requires documented proof of blood links.
- Some tribes require members to be at least one-quarter tribal, where others require one-eighth tribal blood or less.
- Nonetheless, most tribes believe that blood quantum was designed to eradicate tribes and believe that the “lifeblood” of the community is tied to ceremony, tradition and the people not quantum.





The purpose of H.R. 5811 was to amend the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and Alabama and Coushatta Indian Tribes of Texas Restoration Act to allow the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo Tribe of Texas to determine blood quantum requirement for membership. The Restoration Act contained a tribal membership provision for the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (Tigua) Tribe which required members to have 1/8th degree or more of Tigua Indian blood and be enrolled by the tribe.

Under the Restoration Act, the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo is one of the few federally recognized tribes whose membership criteria was prescribed by the federal government. Due to the blood quantum restrictions in the Restoration Act, it was believed that the Tribe would see a significant decline in tribal membership over the next 50 years.

One of the most recognized aspects of tribal sovereignty is the ability of a tribe to determine its own membership. The United States Supreme Court acknowledged the authority of Indian tribes to determine their own membership in *Santa Clara Pueblo v. Martinez*, 436 U.S. 49 (1978).

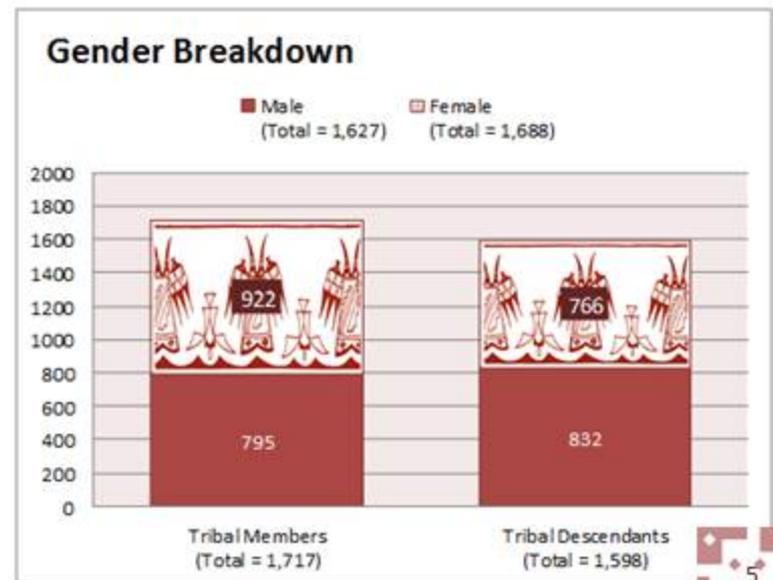
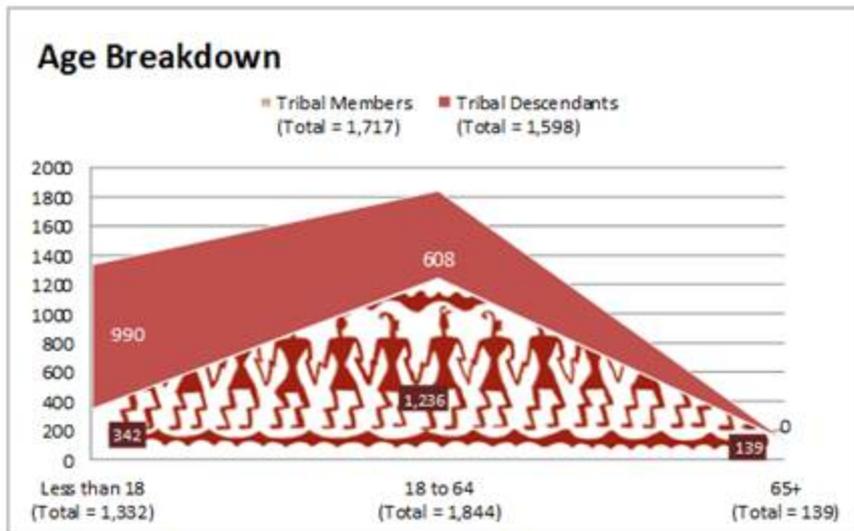
Passed by the U.S. Senate on August 2, 2012 and signed into law by President Obama on August 10, 2012, the H.R. 5811 amended the Restoration Act by authorizing the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo to determine its own blood quantum requirement. Congressman Sylvester Reyes sponsored the bill.

*H.R. 5811: Tigua Blood Quantum Bill*



# The True Tigua Population

- **2012 YDSP Population**—The 2012 analysis conducted by the Information Project Technician found that with the inclusion of descendants, tribal membership has is actually 3,315 as of December 31, 2012. Children below 18 total 1,332 with 342 already on the rolls and 990 to be added to the rolls. In the workforce age group of 18-65 there are a total of 1,844 falling in that bracket. With a 1,236 already enrolled and 608 waiting to be enrolled. Currently there are 139 elders (65+) on rolls. All individuals above 65 qualify for rolls.
- **Population Gender Breakdown** - In 2012 data collection indicates that there are 3,315 persons identified as Tigua. Of the total There are 1,717 enrolled members of which 795 are male and 922 are female. Non enrolled descendants total 1,598 with 832 males and 766 females. Combined there are 1,627 males and 1688 females totaling 3,315—Tiguas.



Fighting

for

Our

Blood

