

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
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CONSULTATION MEETINGS WITH INDIAN LEADERS ARE SCHEDULED

Indian leaders throughout the country will be meeting with representatives of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service to plan the implementation of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (P.L. 93-638).

The Act is considered by many as the most important legislation for Indians since the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934. Signed January 4 of this year by President Ford, it is designed to promote maximum Indian participation in the government and education of Indian people.

Tribal leaders and national Indian organizations have been invited to consultation sessions to be held in 14 cities in March and early April. The purpose of these two day sessions is to review the provisions, intent and language of the Act and to seek Indian views for BIA/IHS policy decisions and regulation writing.

A joint task force of the two Indian agencies will develop draft regulations in April. Another series of meetings with Indian representatives will then be held in May to review this draft.

Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson said, "We are trying to get the greatest possible input from the Indian community as early as possible in the process of implementing this most significant Act. We hope that Indian leaders and the members of their tribes and organizations will be deeply involved in this development effort for the betterment of Indian people."

The Act requires the publication of proposed regulations not later than September 4, 1975 and the publication of final regulations not later than November 4, 1975. Indian tribes, organizations and individuals are invited to submit comments and recommendations concerning the regulations any time prior to 30 days after the publication of the proposed regulations.

The Act gives Indian tribes the right to plan and operate Indian programs for themselves under contract with the Government. It also makes this more feasible and practical through waivers of Federal contracting regulations, planning grants and special personnel provisions.

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Title II, the Indian Education Assistance Act, gives the Indian community a stronger role in approving or disapproving the use of special assistance funds for Indian children in public schools. It also provides for better planning in the use of these funds to meet the education needs of these Indian students.

A list of scheduled meetings follows. For more specific information contact the Bureau of Indian Affairs Area Office.

Schedule of Area Meetings on P.L. 93-638: March 5-6, Albuquerque; March 6-7, Minneapolis; March 10-11, Duluth, Norman, and Phoenix; March 17-18, Juneau, Las Vegas, and Navajo; March 20-21, Anchorage, Washington, D.C. (for Eastern Area); March 25-26, Sacramento; March 31-April 1, Portland; April 1-2, Billings; April 8, Aberdeen.

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