Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Acting Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Donald E. "Del" Laverdure today announced that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has provided $50,000 in a one-time emergency funding for the Emmonak Women's Shelter in the Yup'ik Eskimo village of Emmonak, Alaska. The village's only facility offering domestic violence protection is facing imminent closure due to a funding shortfall.

"By providing this one-time funding, the Bureau of Indian Affairs re-emphasizes the Administration's support for the prevention of domestic violence," Laverdure said. "The protection of American Indian and Alaska Native victims of domestic violence is a priority for me and Secretary Salazar, and it is important that the Emmonak Women's Shelter be able to continue offering help to those who need it."

The 34-year old facility serves families that live in the Emmonak region, including 13 rural villages surrounding Emmonak, and reportedly serves about 500 women and children each year. It is currently operating under a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women, but is not expected to receive notification of new awards until September.

The BIA Office of Indian Services provided the one-time emergency funding to the Emmonak Village, a federally recognized tribe, under its Tribal Priority Allocation authority. The tribe, in turn, will send the funds to the shelter.

Emmonak Village is located approximately 500 air miles northwest of the city of Anchorage, and the Emmonak Women's Shelter is one of two in the state that offers domestic violence shelter and services for Alaska Natives living in the state's rural areas. The other is the Tundra Women's Coalition (TWC) in Bethel, several hundred miles from Emmonak.

The Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs oversees the BIA, which is headed by a director who is responsible for managing day-to-day operations through four offices – Indian Services, Justice Services, Trust Services and Field Operations – that administer or fund tribally based infrastructure, law enforcement, social services, tribal governance, natural and energy resources and trust management programs for the nation's federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages through 12 regional offices and 85 agencies.

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