Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Interior Secretary Gale Norton today announced her designation of Aurene M. Martin, a member of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, as Acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs. "Aurene Martin brings solid experience in Indian affairs and a commitment to excellence to her new role," said Secretary Norton. "She will be an able leader for the Bureau of Indian Affairs during its transition into an efficient and effective Indian service." Martin had served as Deputy Assistant Secretary under Assistant Secretary Neal McCaleb, who recently retired from public service.

"I'm deeply honored to accept Secretary Norton's designation," Martin said, "and I am confident that our efforts to improve the BIA will result in improved services to the trust beneficiaries and the federally recognized tribes."

In October 2001, Martin joined the Interior Department as Counselor to the Assistant Secretary after having served as Republican senior counsel to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs since January 1999, where she oversaw Indian health care, gaming and self-determination issues and appropriations. From October 1998 to January 1999 she served as Director of Congressional and Public Affairs for the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC).

From June 1993 to October 1998, she worked for the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin and left as Senior Staff Attorney. While there she worked on all aspects of tribal representation including Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) litigation, gaming, and self-determination and tribal government issues.

Martin was born in Shawano, Wisconsin, and was raised on the Menominee Indian Reservation. She attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she majored in History, Italian and History of Culture. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1989 and a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1993. She is a member of the Wisconsin State Bar and has been active in its Indian law section, including serving as an officer of the section.

The Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs has responsibility for fulfilling the Department's trust responsibilities and promoting self-determination on behalf of the 562 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments. The Assistant Secretary also oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs, an agency with 10,500 employees nationwide, which is responsible for providing services to approximately 1.4 million individual American Indians and Alaska Natives from the federally recognized tribes.

Note to Editors: A photo of Ms. Martin may be viewed via the Interior Department's web site at www.doi.gov.

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