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For Immediate Release: July 23, 1998
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After several hearings about the need for more police on Tribal lands and the severe need for school construction and repair funds in Indian Country, the Senate Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations cut the President Clinton's request to fund the needs of the American Indian people for law enforcement and school construction by more than $140 million.

Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Kevin Gover was disappointed to learn that after the concern expressed by many members of the Congress, the subcommittee made these drastic cuts in the President's budget request for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. "We presented a very clear picture of the need for more law enforcement personnel, and the necessity of new and safe schools for Indian children. While many members agreed that these were a priority, the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee did not choose to budget the money in these areas." Gover also said, "American Indian communities have less than one-fourth of the police protection of comparable-sized communities. The safety of these Tribal communities is at stake, but we cannot provide more police officers without more money."

"Budget time is a difficult time, and hard decisions need to be made," said Gover. "The Administration hoped the Committee shared our interest in finding solutions to the problems of inadequate law enforcement and crumbling schools on the reservations. We were hopeful that the Tribes would receive the funding necessary to create solutions to these very serious problems." "The reservation schools are old, and there are many of these schools that are literally dangerous to our students. The President's budget was calculated to provide enough money to begin to solve the problem. The Subcommittee seemed to share in the need to fund this construction process, but it did not show up in the bill."