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Commissioner of Indian Affairs William E. Hallett today announced the appointment of Alex Tallchief Skibine as Commissioner’s personal representative for the southern region, which includes the Muskogee and Anadarko Area Offices.

Hallett said that "filling these key regional representative positions with very able, knowledgeable people like Skibine will improve tribal access to my office and promote effective and efficient delivery of resources and services to Indian people."

Skibine, an enrolled member of the Osage Tribe, received a B.A. from Tufts University in 1973 and was graduated from Northwestern University Law School in 1976. Since then he has worked at the Institute for the Development of Indian Law, in Washington, D. C., where he was most recently the Director of the Legal Research Division.

Hallett recently established four regional representative staff positions, serving the South, the Southwest, the Midwest, and the Northwest, to improve BIA follow-up to tribal requests.

Each representative has two primary responsibilities, Hallett said.

First, when a tribe voices concern, the representative determines the central issues and presents several options for meeting the tribe's need.

Second, the representative prepares an action plan to implement the option chosen.

The regional representative is a primary point of contact between the Commissioner and the tribes of the region. Representatives are also responsible for maintaining communication and relations with the tribe.