Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Lovett 202-343-7445
For Immediate Release: January 31, 1978
Print PDF

The Bureau of Indian Affairs has requested an increase of $62.1 million in appropriated funds for fiscal year 1979. The Bureau's request submitted January 23 to Congress as part of the President's budget asks for $949.5 million of Federal appropriation. This includes $761 million for the operation of Indian programs; $86.8 million for the construction of irrigation systems, building and utilities; $71.4 million for road construction, and $30 million payments under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.

Federal funding for these purposes in fiscal year 1978 was $846.7 million. The 1979 fiscal year begins October 1, 1978 and ends September 30, 1979:

For Indian education programs --the largest of BIA's programs --$271 million, an increase of $11.1 million, was requested. This includes $41.4 million for higher education assistance grants for approximately 20,000 Indian college students.

The request for $194.7 million for Indian services exceeds 1978 funding by $18.3 million. These funds are used for tribal governments, social services, law enforcement, Indian self-determination programs and housing. The $20.3 million for housing will provide for the building of approximately 430 new homes and the renovation and/or enlargement of about 2,650.

The $70.3 million requested for natural resources development will be used to continue intensive mineral inventories and energy resource development planning. A major program of forest development will be continued and funding of $3.2 million is requested to continue farm unit development work on the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project. The decrease of $7 million is the result of Congressional add-ons and supplemental funding requests for drought emergencies in Fiscal Year 1978 not included in the 1979 request.

The FY 1979 request for $42.4 million for programs to carry out the Federal trust responsibility represents an increase of $7.5 million over FY 1978 trust responsibility role of the Bureau is the cornerstone of Federal- ~l relationships, and one of the primary goals is to strengthen that role.