Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Request builds on commitment to Indian Country to promote tribal self-determination and self-governance through investments in education for Native youth, support to Indian families, public safety in tribal communities, full payment of contract support costs, tribal governance of land and natural resources, tribal resilience to climate change, and promotion of tribal culture

WASHINGTON – President Obama's Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 budget request for Indian Affairs, which includes the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), reflects the Administration's all-of-government approach to meeting the federal government's responsibilities to the nation's 567 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and building on the commitment to promote strong, resilient nations for today and for future generations.

"President Obama's Fiscal Year 2017 budget request for Indian Affairs embodies his belief that a federal budget that addresses trust and treaty responsibilities with comprehensive, coordinated federal resources promotes strong, resilient tribal nations," said acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Lawrence S. Roberts. "I'm very pleased this budget continues the President's long-standing commitment to our Nation-to-Nation relationship and to our mission of promoting tribal sovereignty for the prosperity of future generations."

The budget request of $2.9 billion, a $137.6 million increase above the FY 2016 enacted level, provides funding to foster tribal self-determination and self-governance through investments in education for Native youth, support of Indian families, additional public safety resources in tribal communities, restoration and governance of tribal lands and resources, and by fostering tribal resilience to climate change, and promoting tribal cultures.

Creating Opportunities for Native Youth

The FY 2017 budget request for Indian Affairs makes key investments to support Generation Indigenous ("Gen-I"), an initiative launched in 2014 to address barriers to success for Native American youth. The request supports President Obama's vision for a 21st century Indian education system that recognizes high quality education as a prerequisite to success in today's global economy, and tribal government's role in building an educated and skilled tribal workforce by delivering world-class and culturally appropriate education to Indian Country's children, youth and adults.

The requested $1.1 billion investment in Indian education supports the **BIE's multi-year transformation** into a capacity builder and service provider and includes increased program investments totaling $49.4 million to:

- Improve opportunities and outcomes in the classroom;
- Expand multi-generational programs to advance early childhood development;
- Provide improved educational instructional services and teacher quality;
- Promote enhanced language and culture programs;
- Enhance broadband and digital access; and

- Support tribal control of student education.

The investment continues the FY 2016 commitment with $138.3 million in FY 2017 for **education construction programs** to replace, repair, and address deferred maintenance needs at the BIE's 183 elementary and secondary schools. This funding will support the next BIE replacement school construction list expected early this year.

In continuing to recognize the important role **tribal post-secondary institutions** play, the request includes an increase of $2 million for the BIE-operated Haskell Indian Nations University and the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, and an additional $500,000 for the two tribal technical colleges funded by BIE: United Tribes Technical College and Navajo Technical University. It also includes $6.8 million in program increases for **tribally controlled, post-secondary education scholarships** with a focus on recipients seeking degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

To foster public-private partnerships to improve student experiences at BIE-funded schools, the request proposes appropriations language enabling the Secretary of the Interior to activate the **National Foundation for American Indian Education**. The foundation's mission will be to raise funds for creating opportunities for Indian students in and out of the classroom. The request also includes an increase of $3.6 million for **Johnson-O'Malley grants**, which is funding primarily distributed by tribes to non-BIE schools to support the education of their Indian students.

The FY 2017 budget request includes an additional $2 million to support tribal youth participation in BIA programs that focus on management of tribal natural resources through science, education and cultural learning. These programs provide job opportunities, instill respect for resources and engender an appreciation of the important role that natural resources play in tribal cultures and economics. The request will support approximately 60 new tribal youth projects and training programs throughout Indian Country, and supplement existing training programs within the BIA's forestry, water and agricultural programs.

In addition, the President's budget includes other federal agencies through Generation Indigenous that **support educational outcomes and provide wrap-around services** to help address barriers and provide opportunities for **Native youth**. These new investments will build on current efforts to better coordinate services for Native youth and demonstrate results across the federal government.

Supporting Indian Families and Protecting Indian Country

Tribal communities often experience disproportionate rates of poverty and a lack of access to services. Tribal leaders have expressed concern about the need to preserve tribal communities by supporting Indian family cohesiveness and stability while also promoting safe tribal communities.

As part of his commitment to **protecting and promoting Indian families and communities**, the President's FY 2017 budget request for the BIA supports tribal communities by investing $21 million in program increases to support continued expansion of the Tiwahe initiative. Tiwahe, which means family in the Lakota language, promotes a comprehensive, integrated and community-based approach to support child welfare, family stability, and strengthening tribal communities as a whole. The initiative requests increases across human services, public safety, courts and job training programs. The initiative directly supports the Generation Indigenous objective of leveraging BIA programs in concert

with other federal programs to support family and community stability and cultural awareness.

The budget request includes $17.4 million over FY 2016 for **BIA Human Services programs**, with increases of:

- $12.3 million for Social Services to provide additional resources to tribes and tribal organizations to build and enhance capacity within their Social Services program;
- $3.4 million for Indian Child Welfare Act programs that work with social services programs and courts to maintain the placement of children within their tribal community, where possible, to avoid the trauma of removal; and
- $1.7 million to improve access to suitable housing for Indian families with children.

To support family stability and to promote **public safety**, the BIA's Office of Justice Services (BIA-OJS) works with tribal courts to address the underlying causes of repeat offenses by making mental health services, alternatives to incarceration and other support services more widely available. In 2017, BIA-OJS will continue pilot programs aimed at reducing recidivism at five sites by three percent by September 30, 2017. The FY 2017 budget request invests an additional $2.6 million for **tribal courts**. This funding will be used to ensure the judicial branch of targeted tribal public safety systems can function effectively to meet family and community needs under the Tiwahe Initiative.

BIA-OJS also provides technical assistance to tribal governments seeking to update their legal codes to better reflect the **Violence Against Women Act's** provisions. These provisions provide stronger protections and safety for vulnerable populations and expand the jurisdiction of tribal law enforcement and justice systems to address domestic violence in tribal communities. The BIA is also implementing training for direct service law enforcement program staff in the areas of law enforcement, social services, victim services, and courts, as well as making it available to tribes operating these programs via self-determination contracts and self-governance compacts.

Tribal Nation-Building

The FY 2017 budget request supports tribal nation-building and self-determination providing funding increases for contract support costs and investing in data for tribal governments and federal agencies to guide future funding.

The request continues the Administration's commitment to fully fund **contract support costs** with an increase of $1 million above the FY 2016 enacted level to fully address requirements for 2017. The budget also includes a legislative proposal to fully fund BIA and Indian Health Service contract support costs as mandatory funding, beginning in 2018.

The FY 2017 budget request includes an increase of $12 million for work with tribal governments and the U.S. Bureau the Census to address federal data quality and availability issues. The request recognizes the long-standing concerns of tribal governments to improve access to and quality of **federal data and information** about Indian Country to inform their decision-making and the delivery of services to tribal communities.

In addition, the request proposes an increase of $4 million to continue development of NativeOneStop.gov, an information portal where tribes can find and access hundreds of federal programs and services available to them. The funding also supports regional and local assistance to

tribes to access services and information

Sustainable Stewardship of Trust Resources

The BIA Office of Trust Services (OTS) assists tribes in managing, protecting and developing their trust lands and natural resources, which total 56 million surface acres and 60 million acres of subsurface mineral estates. OTS programs help tribal landowners steward these resources to protect their cultural, spiritual and traditional uses and enable tribal governments to manage their resources to generate revenue, create jobs, and protect the environment.

The FY 2017 budget request builds upon the BIA's efforts to support tribal management of trust resources that support tribal cultures and communities' economic stability. The request includes an increase of $8.7 million for **Trust Real Estate Services** to expand the capacity to address the backlog of probate cases, as well as for land title and records processing, geospatial support needs, and database management.

The request also includes $2 million to promote **subsistence cooperative management in Alaska**, where Native communities are among the most under-resourced in the nation and whose cultures are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The funding will promote tribal cooperative management of fish and wildlife, while improving access to subsistence resources on federal lands and waters. The request also includes $2 million to promote fishery hatching, rearing, and stocking programs across the country.

Increasing Resilience of Natural Resources in Indian Country

Tribal lands, by their geography and location, are on the front lines of climate change and vulnerable to its effects. From coast-to-coast, particularly in the West and Alaska, tribes continue to experience the damaging, sometimes devastating, impacts of climate change – longterm drought, intensifying wildland fires, changes to flora and fauna that are integral to their subsistence needs and cultures, coastal erosion, rising sea levels – on their environment and people, as well as to their treaty and trust lands and resources.

Tribal governments face immense challenges in planning for and responding to the far-reaching impacts that climate change is having or will have on their populations, infrastructure, economic development, food security, natural and cultural resources, and local cultures.

The FY 2017 budget request provides a $15.1 million increase over the 2016 enacted level across eight BIA trust natural resource programs to support tribal communities in sustainable resource management to **prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change**. Funds will provide support for tribes to:

- Develop and access science, tools, training, and planning; and
- Implement actions that build resilience into their resource management, infrastructure and community development activities.

It also will support Alaska Native villages in the Arctic and other critically vulnerable communities in evaluating options to improve the long-term resilience of their communities.

Indian Settlements

The President's FY 2017 budget request for **Indian water rights settlements** continues this Administration's strong commitment to resolving tribal water rights claims to ensure tribes have access to use and manage water to meet their domestic, economic, cultural and ecological needs.

The Indian Affairs' budget request for Indian Land and Water Claim Settlements is $55.2 million, a $5.7 million increase over the 2016 enacted level. In 2016, Indian Affairs will complete the **Taos Pueblo Indian Water Rights Settlement Act**, and in 2017, will complete the funding requirements for the BIA portion of the **Aamodt Settlement**, enacted as part of the Claims Resolution Act of 2010.

The request also includes $10 million to provide the Yurok Tribe in Northern California with funds to acquire lands as authorized by the **Hoopa-Yurok Settlement Act**. This one-time funding satisfies the federal contribution for land acquisition efforts by the Yurok Tribe and its partners to conserve 47,097 acres of the Klamath-Siskiyou ecoregion to be managed as a salmon sanctuary and sustainable community forest.

Indian Affairs' responsibility to the federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes is rooted in Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution and subsequently defined in treaties, acts of Congress, executive orders and actions, federal court decisions, and federal policies and regulations.

The President's FY 2017 budget request of $13.4 billion for the Department of the Interior reflects his commitment to meeting Federal trust responsibilities to Native Americans, conserving vital national landscapes across the nation, supporting the next century of our public lands, and responsible management of energy development on public lands and offshore areas. The Department of the Interior's Budget in Brief is available online at www.doi.gov/budget and www.doi.gov/budget/2017/Hilites/toc.html.

The Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs supports the Secretary of the Interior in carrying out the Department's responsibilities to the tribes through BIA and BIE programs and services. The BIA's mission includes developing and protecting Indian trust lands and natural and energy resources; supporting social welfare, public safety and justice in tribal communities; and promoting tribal self-determination and self-governance. For more information, visit www.indianaffairs.gov. The BIE implements federal Indian education programs and funds 183 elementary and secondary day and boarding schools (of which two-thirds are tribally operated) located on 64 reservations in 23 states and peripheral dormitories serving over 40,000 students. BIE also operates two post-secondary schools, and administers grants for 28 tribally controlled colleges and universities and two tribal technical colleges, and provides higher education scholarships to Native youth. For more information, visit www.bie.edu.