Will Hold Tribal Energy Roundtable Next Week in Phoenix

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WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell today convened the third meeting of the White House Council on Native American Affairs to discuss ongoing progress and current priorities aimed at working more collaboratively and effectively with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes to advance their economic and social goals.

Seven Cabinet Secretaries and senior officials participated in discussions focused on core objectives, including promoting sustainable Tribal economic development; supporting greater access to and control over healthcare; improving the effectiveness of the Tribal justice systems; expanding and improving educational opportunities for Native youth; and supporting sustainable management of Native lands, environments, and natural resources.

After the meeting, Jewell convened the American Indian Education Study Group to discuss the Group's preliminary findings and recommendations for the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Education. The draft document serves as a basis for Tribal consultations on a redesigned BIE that reflects its gradual evolution from a direct provider of education to a school improvement organization that provides customized service and resources that are tailored to meet the unique needs of each tribally controlled school.

"Your initiative is incredibly important to Indian education," Secretary Jewell told the Study Group. "We need to make this commitment not just for the nearly 50,000 students attending these schools today, but for the many future generations of Native students who will walk through those classroom doors."

Next week, Secretary Jewell will visit Indian Country to participate in a roundtable discussion in Arizona. The meeting with Tribal leaders will focus on spurring renewable energy development on Tribal trust lands. The initiative is part of President Obama's 'all of the above' energy strategy and advances his Climate Action Plan to reduce carbon emissions by building a clean energy economy.

In addition to Secretary Jewell, participants at today's meeting included: Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services; Ernest Moniz, Secretary of Energy; Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education; Gina McCarthy, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency; Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Director of the Office of Management and Budget; Anthony Foxx, Secretary of Transportation; Katherine Archuleta, Director of the Office of Personnel Management; Kevin Washburn, Interior Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs; Cecelia Munoz, Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council; Jeff Zients, Director of the White House National Economic Council; Raina Thiele, Associate Director of Intergovernmental Affairs; and Jodi Gillette, Domestic Policy Council Advisor on Native American Affairs.

The White House Council on Native American Affairs was established by Presidential Executive Order in June, 2013 in response to tribal leader requests that the federal family do a better job of coordinating

its departments and agency programs aimed at assisting tribal communities in promoting their social and economic priorities.
