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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today praised the U.S. Senate's confirmation of Larry Echo Hawk, an enrolled member of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma and the first American Indian in U.S. history elected as a state attorney general, to serve as the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs.

"I want to thank the Senate for expeditiously approving Larry Echo Hawk's confirmation," Salazar said, "He is a seasoned executive with an extensive background in government, Indian law and public policy. As Interior's Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, he will help the Department meet its goals of empowering American Indian and Alaska Native communities and supporting the nation's economic recovery."

Echo Hawk was elected Attorney General of Idaho in 1990. He had served as the Bannock Country Prosecuting Attorney since 1986. Before that, he served two consecutive terms in the Idaho House of Representatives, from 1982 to 1986. Echo Hawk began his legal career as a legal services attorney working for impoverished Indian people in California, then opened a private law office in Salt Lake City. In 1977, he was hired as tribal attorney for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes at the Fort Hall Indian Reservation in Idaho, a position he held for more than eight years. He became special counsel to the tribes in 1998. He is admitted to the bar in Idaho, Utah and California.

Echo Hawk has served on the American Indian Services National Advisory Board and Board of Trustees. He was appointed by President Clinton to the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, which is responsible for coordinating the federal government's efforts to combat juvenile delinquency in the United States. He also has served on the Indian Alcoholism Counseling and Recovery Housing Program and the American Indian Community Resource Center Board.

A former U.S. Marine, Echo Hawk is a professor of law at Brigham Young University's J. Reuben Clark Law School, teaching federal Indian law, criminal law, criminal procedure, evidence and criminal trial practice, and has published several scholarly papers.

Echo Hawk received his Bachelor of Science degree from Brigham Young University in 1970, where he studied on an NCAA football scholarship and was named to the Western Athletic Conference All-Academic Football Team in 1969. He was a member of the varsity football team at BYU from 1967 to 1969, playing in every game during his career. He started at safety as a junior and senior, leading the team and ranking fourth in the Western Athletic Conference with five interceptions as a junior in 1968. He earned Academic All-Conference First Team honors as a senior.

Echo Hawk received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Utah in 1973, and attended Stanford Graduate School of Business's MBA Program from 1974 to 1975. He has received numerous awards and honors, including Distinguished Alumnus Awards from both Brigham Young University (1992) and the University of Utah (2003). In 1991, Echo Hawk was awarded George Washington University's prestigious Martin Luther King medal for his contributions to human rights, and was honored as a speaker at the Democratic National Convention. As Idaho's delegation Chair, he became the first

American Indian to lead a state delegation to a national political convention.

Professor Echo Hawk was honored in 1995 as the first BYU graduate ever to receive the National Collegiate Athletic Association’s prestigious Silver Anniversary Award, which is given to a select few prominent athletes who completed their collegiate athletic eligibility 25 years ago and have distinguished themselves in their careers and personal lives.

Echo Hawk, 60, and his wife Terry have six children and 22 grandchildren.