Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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For Immediate Release: February 9, 1993
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The Lifetime Learning and Rebuild America economic stimulus package proposed by President Clinton will provide economic development opportunities, rebuild and maintain roads, repair schools, jails and juvenile detention centers, and provide funds to operate elementary and secondary schools on many of America's Indian reservations.

The total stimulus package calls for $102.4 million, with most of the funds to be spent by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for the benefit of Indians by the end of Fiscal Year 1993.

The range of projects in the Bureau of Indian Affairs will cover additional funds for all of the Bureau-funded schools, provide $15 million for forest development on Indian reservations, and provide funds to guarantee $48 million in loan projects. The new monies boost the Bureau's $1.5 billion FY 1993 budget which has already experienced shortfalls in the Indian School Equalization Program formula because of increased school enrollment for the current school year.

Of the $48.8 million for school operations, $22.6 million will be spent for the 1992-93 school year to meet a shortfall in funds because of an unexpected five-percent increase in school enrollment and to meet administrative cost grants. An additional $2 6. 2 million will be used in the 1993-94 school year to supplement the funds available for the school year beginning July 1, 1993.

In addition, $9.4 million will be spent to repair, improve, and rehabilitate school, law enforcement, and other facilities. BIA funds 181 schools, 70 of which are contracted directly to tribes which operate them.

A total of $15 million is targeted for forest development on Indian reservations. The funds will be used for tree planting and pre-commercial thinning to increase future harvesting and sale of wood products on Indian reservations.

The Bureau will have available an additional $5.6 million to guarantee loans to start or expand Indian businesses on reservations. The funds available are expected to support loans of $48 million to tribes for business ventures which include hotels, convention centers, logging mills, an office complex, and gaming enterprises. Many of the projects are expected to be under construction within 30 days of funding.

$23.5 million will be spent for road maintenance on Indian reservations for projects to improve access for schools, medical facilities, businesses and tourists.