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Interior's Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Eddie F. Brown said today the President's fiscal year 1992 budget request of $1.9 billion for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) builds upon the foundation established last year by President Bush and Secretary Lujan to reform the deli very of key social, financial, and natural resources programs to American Indians.

"The President's budget establishes a new program entitled Tribal Horizons that is designed to improve management of Interior-sponsored Indian programs, enhance educational opportunities for American Indians and support tribal self-determination," Brown stated.

The Tribal Horizons initiative focuses on three major areas in Indian programs -- management improvement, education, and Indian self-determination. Funding increases within the overall BIA budget for these special areas total $104.3, including $72.5 million in self-determination, $24.5 million in education, and $8. 7 million in management improvement.

Current appropriations in the President's request for the operation of Indian programs is $1.400 billion, compared to $1.559 billion enacted in 1991.

An additional $2 million is requested in departmental support for the Bureau's management improvement initiative. That support will be in the form of: $1.2 million for the Office of American Indian Trust to develop an inventory of trust assets managed by BIA and to conduct trust resources reviews in order to ensure the effectiveness of the trust management program; $100,000 increase in the Office of Self-Governance which will serve as coordination point for the self-governance demonstration projects; $500,000 for the Office of Audit and Evaluation to provide an independent and flexible means for carrying out internal audits and evaluations of BIA programs; and $200,000 to strengthen the management capability of the assistant secretary's office.

Direct BIA funding for management improvement includes increases of $4 million to address previously identified and recently surfaced management problems; $1.8 million to convert to the new Federal Finance System accounting operation; $100,000 for accountant training; $500,000 for financial trust services; $200,000 for training of contracting officers; and $100,000 for total quality management.

The $15.6 million increase requested for BIA school operations includes $4 million in Education 2000 grants for projects designed to raise the educational achievement level of Indian students in BIA-funded schools to levels that meet or exceed national norms by the year 2000. Early childhood development programs will be increased by $1.9 million; funding for the operation of BIA schools under the Indian School Equalization Formula (ISEF) will increase by $6 million; a $1.7 million increase is requested for the management of education programs; and an additional $5 million is requested for the rehabilitation of BIA schools, which will bring the total funding in this area to $35 million.

Indian self-determination increases are aimed at meeting locally-determined service needs. Decision-making will be shifted away from Washington to the local level which will provide increased flexibility and resources to meet reservation-specific goals and priorities. The $72.5 million increase creates a $10

million pilot grant program to allow selected tribes greater control over resources to enhance community and economic development on their reservations. Tribal governments will compete for the funds by designing long-range plans along with an annual action agenda.

A $42.8 million increase in the Indian Priority System (IPS), under which funding priorities for programs are established at the reservation and agency levels, provides for more funds to meet basic service needs. Self-determination grants are being increased by $9 million to allow tribes to design and administer a wider array and more complex set of programs for improving tribal governmental capabilities. An additional $10.6 million in the Indian Child Welfare grant program, for a total of $20 million, allow funds to be distributed to tribes under a formula-based on tribal populations of children. This formula approach is a much more stable way to fund long term programs. Tribes will develop four-year plans for programs to prevent child abuse and neglect. The grant funds will also be available for day-care operations, parent training, legal representation of children, development and implementation of welfare codes, temporary child custody, and other intervention and prevention activities.

More than $27 million in increases (above the comparable 1991 enacted amounts for non-education operating programs of the BIA) further the management improvements and tribal empowerment programs in the Tribal Horizons initiative. The increases include $2.3 million in contract support; $2 million in employee displacement; $1.3 million for the title records office; $1.2 million in law enforcement; $1 million for irrigation operations and maintenance; $500,000 for prairie dog control; $400,000 for new tribes; and $200,000 for an irrigation drainage program.

Also included in the budget request is $16 million to continue support for the seven self-governance compact tribes, and $3 million for self-governance grants.

The FY 1992 budget request proposes several decreases in the Operation of Indian Programs account. Welfare assistance payments are estimated to decrease by $11.8 million as a result of proposed changes to regulations which will make employable adults without dependents ineligible for welfare assistance. Case workers will assist former clients in developing an employability plan to prepare them for paying jobs. BIA's wildlife and parks program is proposed to be reduced by $8.9 million. Other decreases include: water resources, $2.9 million; litigation support, $1.1 million; and water rights negotiations and litigation, $3 million.

Included in the budget request is $122.6 million to meet the Secretary's obligations in various settlement agreements passed by Congress. These include: Zuni Land Conservation, $8 million; Fallon water Rights Settlement, $3 million; Pyramid Lake Water Rights Settlement, $25 million; Fort Hall Water Rights Settlement, $12 million; Fort McDowell Water Rights Settlement, $23 million; and Seneca Nation Settlement of $35 million.

(Note to Editors: A fact sheet on Tribal Horizons is attached.)