Identifying Economic Priorities in Indian Country

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Themes from Secretary Zinke

- Sovereignty
- Self-Determination
- Self-Governance
- Respect
- Economic Freedom and Empowerment
- Reduced Regulatory Burden
“Sovereignty has to mean something”
1. Economic Development

• How can we best help tribes develop self-sustaining economies that promote jobs, wealth, prosperity and independence for all?

• When Indian Country prospers, the surrounding states also prosper

• Energy development critical to this effort
2. Tribal Empowerment

• How can we better empower tribal leaders?
• How can we best return economic sovereignty to tribes?
3. Human Capital Development

• What is the best way to invest in Native people?
• Not just college education, but also skilled trades
• States are better off when Indian Country’s workforce is better educated and better trained
• Long-term strategy for promoting tribal economic growth and tribal self-governance simultaneously
ANPRM Comments from Indian Country
(feedback received by DOI)

- Old statute and outdated regulations
- Original legislative intent of the founding fathers excluded states
- Federal common law cases breached that exclusivity
- Federal and state regulations compounded the problem
- Indian Country suggested that we:
  - Give tribes the exclusive ability to tax and regulate trade and commerce that occurs on trust or restricted fee land (“Indian Lands”)
  - Allow tribes to opt-out of oppressive federal regulatory oversight of some or all of their Indian Lands
  - Replace an uncertain taxation system with a jurisdiction based system, just like states
Working Together with Indian Country

• Dear Tribal Leader Letter
• We need to get information on projects that are not happening that would happen in a new regulatory environment
  • Capital Expenditures
  • Annual Revenues
  • Jobs
  • Economic Impact Studies
  • Treaty Obligations
We Need Help from Indian Country

That’s what we’re thinking …

What do y’all think?