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FOR: ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS (AS-IA)
WORKFORCE EFFICIENCY & PRODUCTIVITY AND DOI
EMERGENCY PERMITTING PROCEDURES

TRANSCRIPT OF WORKFORCE EFFICIENCY/PRODUCTIVITY
AND EMERGENCY PERMITTING CONSULTATIONS

HELD ON

FRIDAY, MAY 30, 2025

9:07 A.M.

VIRTUAL BIE INTERESTED PARTIES

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<p>Page 2</p> <p>1 APPEARANCES</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 Rebecca Beauregard, Facilitator (Remote)</p> <p>4 Kyle Vint, Tech Support (Remote)</p> <p>5 Justin Burnstein, Kearns West (Remote)</p> <p>6 Travis Clark, BIE</p> <p>7 Tony Dearman, BIE</p> <p>8 Margaret Williams, BFTA Director (Remote)</p> <p>9 Timothy Begay, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic</p> <p>10 Institute (Remote)</p> <p>11 Derrick Beetso, Hayilka (Remote)</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>	<p>Page 4</p> <p>1 Hayilka, who is part of our contractor team and</p> <p>2 recording your comments made here today.</p> <p>3 Representatives from the Department of the</p> <p>4 Interior are here and actively listening to your</p> <p>5 comments. All comments you share today will be</p> <p>6 passed along to them after the session.</p> <p>7 This is an opportunity for tribal leaders</p> <p>8 and the broader public to provide input on workforce</p> <p>9 efficiency and productivity. We greatly appreciate</p> <p>10 you all for taking time today to attend today's</p> <p>11 consultation.</p> <p>12 This is a virtual consultation. All of</p> <p>13 our attendees will be joining online. I'll walk us</p> <p>14 through some information to get us on the same page</p> <p>15 about how this will go.</p> <p>16 We are supported by my colleagues Kyle and</p> <p>17 Jacob. Jacob will be your main point of contact for</p> <p>18 technical support. They will share their name and</p> <p>19 email in the chat, and you can use the chat function</p> <p>20 to address any technical challenges you encounter.</p> <p>21 Closed captioning services are available.</p> <p>22 Please go to the bottom of your screen, click on the</p> <p>23 three dots that say "More," select captions and</p> <p>24 choose "Show captions." You can also use the live</p> <p>25 captioning service available at the link in the</p>
<p>Page 3</p> <p>1 WORKFORCE EFFICIENCY/PRODUCTIVITY AND EMERGENCY</p> <p>2 PERMITTING CONSULTATIONS</p> <p>3 HELD ON</p> <p>4 FRIDAY, MAY 30, 2025</p> <p>5 9:07 A.M.</p> <p>6</p> <p>7 MS. BEAUREGARD: Good morning. Welcome to</p> <p>8 today's consultation session for tribal leaders,</p> <p>9 representatives, and other interested parties of the</p> <p>10 Bureau of Indian Education. This meeting is being</p> <p>11 hosted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. We are here</p> <p>12 to gather your comments on the Assistant Secretary</p> <p>13 for Indian Affairs reorganization plan as part of</p> <p>14 Executive Order 14210, Department of Government</p> <p>15 Efficiency Workforce Optimization Initiative.</p> <p>16 That's a lot. For clarity, throughout</p> <p>17 today's session, we'll refer to this as workforce</p> <p>18 efficiency and productivity. Today's consultation</p> <p>19 session is being recorded. My name is Rebecca</p> <p>20 Beauregard. I will be facilitating today's</p> <p>21 consultation. My colleagues and I are contractors</p> <p>22 to the Department of the Interior. We are here as</p> <p>23 impartial facilitators supporting the Department's</p> <p>24 team in conducting these consultations.</p> <p>25 Also, with us is Derek Beetso from</p>	<p>Page 5</p> <p>1 chat.</p> <p>2 Zoom may ask about your spoken language.</p> <p>3 Select yours and hit save or cancel to close the</p> <p>4 box. This will not impact your ability to</p> <p>5 participate in the meeting or use closed captioning.</p> <p>6 All attendees will be muted and off camera</p> <p>7 until the comment time. We will provide full</p> <p>8 instructions for comments in a few moments. You'll</p> <p>9 be invited to unmute and turn on your camera when it</p> <p>10 is your turn to speak.</p> <p>11 If you have any questions about the</p> <p>12 meetings and our virtual schedule, you can email</p> <p>13 RACA, that's R-A-C-A, raca@bia.gov.</p> <p>14 We also have a court reporter in</p> <p>15 attendance so that a complete transcript can be</p> <p>16 prepared and shared with DOI officials. If you</p> <p>17 choose to comment, please state your name, title,</p> <p>18 and tribal affiliation. This information will</p> <p>19 assist the court reporter.</p> <p>20 Our session today will run approximately</p> <p>21 5.5 hours concluding at 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time.</p> <p>22 We'll queue for a 30-minute break from approximately</p> <p>23 1 o'clock, but as it is a long meeting, I encourage</p> <p>24 you to take breaks as needed.</p> <p>25 Officials from the Department of Interior</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p> <p>1 will begin the consultation with a brief 2 presentation on the respective topic. Following the 3 presentation, we'll invite comments from elected or 4 appointed tribal leaders, their designated 5 representatives, and comments from any other 6 interested parties. Additional participation will 7 be shared at that time.</p> <p>8 We want to ensure that all comments are 9 heard and captured. To create space for all voices, 10 we will hear from everyone once before offering 11 second opportunities to speak. Given the number of 12 attendees and the limited time available, we 13 respectfully ask that speakers be mindful of the 14 time they take to share comments.</p> <p>15 As facilitators, part of our role is to 16 help manage the flow of this consultation session to 17 allow for broad participation and we may offer 18 gentle time reminders to ensure we hear from as many 19 tribal perspectives as possible.</p> <p>20 This consultation session is specifically 21 open for elected officials or representatives of 22 federally recognized tribes and other interested 23 parties of the Bureau of Indian Education. Please 24 edit your Zoom name to include your affiliation if 25 you have not already done so.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p> <p>1 you wish for this moment. and we'll just take the 2 time now.</p> <p>3 Okay. Thanks, everyone.</p> <p>4 With that I will turn now to Tony Dearman, 5 the director of the Bureau of Indian Education.</p> <p>6 MS. DEARMAN: Thank you, Rebecca. 7 Rebecca, I want to make sure -- do a soundcheck. 8 Can you hear me clearly?</p> <p>9 MS. BEAUREGARD: Yes.</p> <p>10 MS. DEARMAN: All right. Excellent.</p> <p>11 First off, I want to thank everyone for 12 joining today. I want to thank all of our 13 stakeholders, our tribal leaders, and especially our 14 BIE staff. Thank you for joining and listening in 15 to today's consultation.</p> <p>16 Today it'll be me and Travis Clark. It'll 17 be the two of us representing the Bureau of Indian 18 Education during this virtual consultation. And I'm 19 Tony Dearman, citizen of the Cherokee Nation and 20 director of the Bureau of Indian Education. And of 21 course, this is Travis Clark, the associate deputy 22 director for strategic directions.</p> <p>23 So with that, we will get started.</p> <p>24 MR. CLARK: Okay. So I'm going to give a 25 quick overview of what brings us here today, kind of</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p> <p>1 If you would like to submit written 2 comments, you can submit those through email or mail 3 by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Monday, July 7, 2025. 4 The email address and mailing address will be posted 5 in the chat.</p> <p>6 Our agenda today will begin with an 7 opening prayer from Dr. Timothy Begay, vice 8 president of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic 9 Institute, before Tony Dearman, director of Bureau 10 of Indian Education introduces the Indian Affairs 11 Representatives.</p> <p>12 We'll have a presentation to guide us 13 through the purpose of the consultation, including 14 the executive order for the workplace -- workforce 15 efficiency and also, the secretary's order stemming 16 from that. We'll then move into leader-to-leader 17 consultation. We'll have a break and we'll continue 18 comments until everyone has had an opportunity, 19 wrapping up at 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>20 With that, I would like to turn now to Dr. 21 Timothy Begay if he is with us.</p> <p>22 MR. VINT: Rebecca, I'm not seeing him in 23 the participants list.</p> <p>24 MS. BEAUREGARD: Okay. So let's just 25 share a moment of silence and you can pray or do as</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p> <p>1 given the 30,000-foot view level from the department 2 and the Indian Affairs Office and then turn it over 3 to Tony for some more of the BIE specific 4 information.</p> <p>5 So what brings us here today? Why are we 6 engaging in tribal consultation with you all? 7 Namely two one executive order and a secretarial 8 order.</p> <p>9 First is executive order 14210 on 10 government efficiency workforce optimization. As 11 with every federal aid agency, the BIE as well as 12 our Indian Affairs partners, we have been ordered to 13 undertake this effort on examining workforce 14 efficiencies and optimization.</p> <p>15 And then the second is secretarial order 16 3429, which proposes the consolidation of particular 17 business functions within the department. That has 18 not happened yet, so it is on hold with Indian 19 Affairs until -- including BIE until the conclusion 20 of this tribal consultation where we will take this 21 information back, what we hear today to our 22 leadership and give them the ability to make a fully 23 informed decision based on the input that we hear 24 from our tribal stakeholders today.</p> <p>25 Next slide, please.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 10</p> <p>1 Okay. So first, a bit about executive 2 order 14210, this is the executive order that was 3 signed by the president regarding the examination 4 for all federal bureaus to look for workforce 5 efficiencies within their respective branches. 6 Specifically, for Indian affairs, we are going to 7 direct the development of a plan and we are seeking 8 input specifically on the restructure of Indian 9 Affairs to support more efficient interactions with 10 tribes, addressing critical funding structures 11 including efficiency barriers to expedite funding to 12 tribes and tribal programs, which would include BIE 13 of course. And then third, increasing support for 14 tribal self-governance and self-determination. 15 So to structure the conversation when it 16 comes to the workforce efficiency executive order, 17 those are the issues that we're trying to focus on 18 today. 19 Next slide, please. 20 For the secretarial order 3429. 21 consolidation. You know, again, there are multiple 22 kind of behind the house, behind the curtain 23 business functions that the department is interested 24 in looking if they can consolidate those functions 25 to find efficiencies and/or savings. So if you</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 12</p> <p>1 We do provide direct services and funding 2 that supports more than 40 -- 400,000 students 3 across the United States. Our direct services 4 include operating 183 elementary and secondary 5 schools on 64 reservations in 23 states. With 6 direct services, we serve approximately 40,000 7 students in our K-12 system. Of the 183 elementary 8 and secondary schools, 55 are directed by the Bureau 9 of Indian Education while 128 are tribally 10 controlled charter schools operating independently 11 under BIE contracts or grants, and these 128 are 12 operated by the tribes. 13 We also have the operation of off 14 reservation residential schools, peripheral 15 dormitories, prenatal and infant toddler services, 16 adult education services, and early childhood 17 learning programs. 18 We also have funding that goes into the 19 public school system, and we serve approximately 20 317,000 students in the public school system through 21 funding that we receive as well. 22 We also operate two post-secondary 23 institutions, one being Haskell Indian Nations 24 University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic 25 Institute. And then we also support 33 tribal</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 11</p> <p>1 think of things such as human resources, IT, sort of 2 those back of the house business functions. The 3 secretarial order is examining, you know, whether 4 consolidation of those functions across the entire 5 department, which would include Indian Affairs and 6 BIE specifically. You know, looking to see if that 7 would be an efficient use of resources to maximize 8 kind of the achievement of our mission as the BIE. 9 So seeking input on that again, that 10 nothing has occurred yet around that. Officially, 11 we are going to consultation to seek your input 12 first before making a decision whether or not that 13 would work for the BIE. 14 Next slide, please. 15 With this, I'll turn it over to Tony to go 16 over some of the BIE specific information. 17 MS. DEARMAN: Thank you, Travis. 18 Some of the BIE major functions is we're 19 very proud of our team because we take pride in 20 working with our tribal leaders and our 21 stakeholders. And you're going to see that when we 22 go in and we work with our tribes, we really want to 23 work on an individual basis to where we're 24 addressing their cultural and economic needs to 25 really promote success within the communities.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p> <p>1 colleges and universities through funding and then 2 as well as higher education scholarships. 3 Next slide. 4 Some of the proposed workforce strategies 5 that we're talking about and really considering and 6 want our stakeholders to provide input on is making 7 sure that we are upholding our trust 8 responsibilities. And we hear that a lot throughout 9 in dealing with our communities is, you know, we do 10 have a trust and treaty responsibility and we take 11 that very seriously. So we want to make sure that 12 we continue to uphold that. 13 Next slide, please. 14 Our core approach is really going to be to 15 focus and invest on our frontline educators because 16 we all know that it is a competition in the United 17 States for educators, frontline as far as teachers 18 and administrators. But we also, we do not want to 19 forget our support staff, and that's one thing 20 you're going to hear us say. It's just not teachers 21 and administrators within our system. It's all of 22 our -- it's all of our staff within our schools 23 because everyone that's within the school is very 24 important in making sure that our students are 25 getting the services and the educations that they</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p> <p>1 need.</p> <p>2 We want to make sure that we're empowering</p> <p>3 the supportive teachers, counselors because we</p> <p>4 continue to hear from our communities that it's</p> <p>5 important that in recruiting teachers, counselors,</p> <p>6 and administrators, that they learn the cultures,</p> <p>7 their traditions of the community that they're</p> <p>8 coming into if they're not from the community.</p> <p>9 Ideally, we'd love to have members from</p> <p>10 the community because we do know that our success is</p> <p>11 -- as far as turnover is good. You know, we do not</p> <p>12 have this turnover experience with community members</p> <p>13 coming into our system.</p> <p>14 Also, we want to really shift, and we've</p> <p>15 started doing this, shift the data, and really</p> <p>16 looking at the data that we have within our system.</p> <p>17 A few years back, we were told in a senate hearing</p> <p>18 they were tired of hearing stories, and so we're</p> <p>19 going to continue telling the stories. It's just</p> <p>20 that we're going to tell the stories with the data</p> <p>21 that we're collecting. So we look forward to making</p> <p>22 sure that we are collecting the data from our</p> <p>23 communities in our system.</p> <p>24 And then also, we want to continue to</p> <p>25 strengthen tribal consultation. One of the things</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p> <p>1 communications with tribes on funding opportunities,</p> <p>2 and improving technical assistance and direct</p> <p>3 support to tribes to obtain and administer funding.</p> <p>4 And then the third guiding question would</p> <p>5 be increasing Indian Affairs support for tribal</p> <p>6 self-governance and self-determination. How can</p> <p>7 Indian Affairs optimize its functionality and</p> <p>8 effectiveness to provide tribes with improved</p> <p>9 flexibility to foster economic growth, address the</p> <p>10 specific local needs of their communities, and</p> <p>11 increase pathways to self-determination and self-</p> <p>12 governance?</p> <p>13 And so with that, I believe that's the</p> <p>14 last slide, and we are seeking your comment and</p> <p>15 input.</p> <p>16 MR. DEARMAN: To Rebecca.</p> <p>17 MR. CLARK: So I'll turn it back to you,</p> <p>18 Rebecca.</p> <p>19 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Travis.</p> <p>20 And thank you, Tony.</p> <p>21 I'll just go through some brief</p> <p>22 instructions so we're all on the same page.</p> <p>23 So we are now opening the comment period</p> <p>24 for workforce efficiency and productivity. We'd</p> <p>25 like to first invite input from elected or appointed</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p> <p>1 that we've taken a lot of pride in the Bureau of</p> <p>2 Indian Education is that we want to make sure not</p> <p>3 just in the 128 tribally-operated schools, but also</p> <p>4 in our 55 bureau-operated schools as well as our</p> <p>5 TCUs, we want to hear from our stakeholders, from</p> <p>6 our tribal leaders, how we can get better in</p> <p>7 servicing our students and our communities and our</p> <p>8 tribes.</p> <p>9 Next slide.</p> <p>10 MR. CLARK: So quickly we'll just go over</p> <p>11 kind of, again, the guiding comments that we're</p> <p>12 seeking input on as we engage in this tribal</p> <p>13 consultation.</p> <p>14 So question number one, restructuring of</p> <p>15 Indian Affairs, and again, thinking of this in the</p> <p>16 context of BIE. The question would be what</p> <p>17 recommendations would you make to Indian Affairs to</p> <p>18 improve efficiency through staffing changes,</p> <p>19 resource sharing, process improvements, and</p> <p>20 potential consolidation of programs and offices.</p> <p>21 Second question concerns addressing</p> <p>22 current funding structures. Indian Affairs is</p> <p>23 likewise seeking input on how to better support</p> <p>24 tribes by reducing the administrative burden to</p> <p>25 access and administer funding, improving</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p> <p>1 tribal leaders. These comments will be prioritized</p> <p>2 before we hear comments from other groups,</p> <p>3 associations, or other interested parties.</p> <p>4 To indicate your intention to provide</p> <p>5 comment, please use the "Raise hand" function at the</p> <p>6 bottom of the Zoom screen. Zoom will generate a</p> <p>7 queue of attendees wishing to comment.</p> <p>8 At this time, elected or appointed tribal</p> <p>9 leaders who wish to comment, please virtually raise</p> <p>10 your hand. We will follow the order in which you</p> <p>11 appear on my screen. I will announce that it is</p> <p>12 your turn, and you'll be prompted to unmute and</p> <p>13 share your comment. If you encounter issues, we can</p> <p>14 work with you on chat to resolve it and get you back</p> <p>15 in the queue.</p> <p>16 For those attending by phone, please press</p> <p>17 nine to raise your hand and join the queue. You</p> <p>18 will use -- I'm sorry, star nine to raise your hand</p> <p>19 and join the queue. You'll use star six to unmute</p> <p>20 your phone when it is your turn to provide comment.</p> <p>21 If you choose to comment, please introduce yourself</p> <p>22 with your name, affiliation, and role or position.</p> <p>23 Our court reporter will note this information for</p> <p>24 the transcript.</p> <p>25 And so we will begin with who is first on</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p> <p>1 my screen, and I see Chairman Joseph Rupnick. We 2 will go ahead and unmute you and please give your 3 comment. 4 MR. RUPNICK: Good morning. My name is 5 Joseph Rupnick, chairman for Prairie Band Potawatomi 6 Nation, and thank you for allowing me to submit my 7 comments on the consultation for workforce 8 optimization initiative. 9 Some of the briefing slides that I heard 10 just now, you know, I think I disagree with Mr. 11 Dearman about making sure that the agency abides by 12 its trust responsibility and treaty obligations, 13 especially when it comes to the dismissal of a lot 14 of probationary staff at Haskell Indian Nation 15 University. 16 One thing that I do want to point out is I 17 am a member of the Haskell Board of Regents. I'm 18 the treasurer on that board and have been in 19 consultation with the board and other areas when 20 this first reduction in force happened. First off, 21 I would like to say that one five-hour consultation 22 directed or dedicated to BIE is not enough. The 23 impacts of the firing of the probationary staff at 24 BIE have not been discussed and analyzed, and there 25 is no indication that there is any plan to determine</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p> <p>1 office, all without first consulting tribal nations. 2 This was a plan -- plain violation of our right to 3 consultation. 4 Now, we are alarmed at the emphasis of EO 5 14210 requires a plan to reduce the size of federal 6 government workforce including RIFs and plans to 7 reorganize. Consultation should occur prior to any 8 unilateral reductions and reorganizations to take 9 place. 10 For BIE workforce optimization initiative 11 consultation, the department has presented tribal 12 leaders with three questions concerning efficiency, 13 funding access, and tribal self-determination. 14 These questions ask what staffing changes could 15 improve efficiency, what funding structures and 16 mechanisms could be simplified, but BIE's pre- 17 consultation actions indicated that the intention is 18 to fire as many staffs as it can regardless of 19 whether or not the firings would achieve any of the 20 department's stated aims or meet any of the 21 department's obligations to our nations. 22 If BIE intends to repeat the cuts and 23 firings it attempted in February, it must first 24 consult with the tribal nations explaining with 25 specificity the kinds of staffing changes it is</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p> <p>1 the impacts of the firing of significant number of 2 staff through BIE. 3 Second, the consultation only includes 4 vague nonspecific requests. We request that the 5 department reschedule additional consultations 6 specific to the invited Dear Tribal Leaders letter 7 and include an analysis of the impacts of the firing 8 that occurred and clear prospective policies and 9 proposed procedures for comment. 10 We object to the three different 11 consultation topics combined into a single set of 12 consultation opportunities. Tribal nations were 13 initially invited to consult on the BIE's workforce 14 efficiency and productivity actions related to 15 executive order 14210. Thereafter, the department 16 amended the invitation to cover emergency permitting 17 procedures Interior developed to respond to 18 purported national energy emergency. 19 Attempting to cover two additional 20 complicated and contentious topics without any 21 additional time will inevitably and severely reduce 22 the quality of this consultation. Adequate 23 consultation must be conducted prior to making any 24 decision. Yet the department fired at least 72 25 employees at Haskell and SIPI and the BIE central</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p> <p>1 proposing and engage tribal nations on the strategic 2 implementation of those changes to avoid the harms. 3 Haskell specifically has 147 nations that are 4 represented in that school. Prairie Band is just 5 one, and we support hiring additional adequate staff 6 to fill BIE's many vacancies and the positions that, 7 by the government's own admission, are needed to 8 adequately serve native students. 9 Efficiency, which BIE states is one of its 10 primary goals, will be advanced by increased hiring, 11 not firing. We cannot simply discuss the strategies 12 for staffing changes without first talking about the 13 impact of the bureau's firing. The impacts of the 14 firing of BIE probationary staff were severe. 15 Prairie Band cares deeply about higher education 16 opportunities for our members. We were outraged at 17 the damage our students were placed in when staff 18 were summarily dismissed with no action plan. 19 In particular, Prairie Band Potawatomi has 20 sent many members to Haskell Nation's University. 21 The nation depends on these higher education 22 opportunities to provide quality education for our 23 members by reducing staff. By nearly 25 percent at 24 Haskell, our students were endangered. Their health 25 was put in danger when they were -- did not have the</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p> <p>1 sanitary conditions to live in. Their classes were 2 canceled or taught by teachers not prepared on such 3 a short notice to take over classes. Their mental 4 health suffered as those who were intended to take 5 care and educate them were treated without respect. 6 Through those reductions in staff, the 7 poor quality of education offered at these 8 institutions violated our treaty rights. We are 9 very concerned that this consultation is not 10 sufficiently considering the impact of BIE staff 11 reductions that already occurred and that would have 12 continued had we not demanded consultation. We did 13 not have to wonder what the impact of the cuts will 14 have since we have already seen that the reductions 15 were detrimental to the health, safety, and quality 16 of education to our students. 17 It is worth noting that BIE has numerous 18 federal reports, outlines, and currently does not 19 have enough staff to be efficient in serving Indian 20 country and are students with adequate human 21 resources and facilities. Firing staff will not 22 eliminate, bloat, or waste because BIE is already 23 understaffed. We've seen that at Haskell too where 24 they are understaffed still trying to fulfill those 25 jobs.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p> <p>1 increase financial accountability, additional staff 2 are needed. We would follow the actual research and 3 funding and hiring staff to eliminate the waste by 4 promoting and monitoring the delivery of specific 5 educational services required by law. 6 We want to reaffirm BIE's commitment to 7 consult with tribal nations which has done -- which 8 was not done and which these consultations have yet 9 to be shown. Our students have described to us, 10 specifically Prairie Band Potawatomi students, that 11 the reduction of class, instruction quality, 12 canceled or shortened classes, the inability to 13 focus on schools due to neglected facilities, fear 14 for their education future and delay in financial 15 aid uncertainty about how they will pay their bills 16 in a sudden lack of student support and advertising. 17 That the department or BIE determines 18 despite tribal input, that BIE should nonetheless 19 reduce its workforce, BIE must disclose to Tribal 20 Nation to the extent those cuts and conduct 21 additional consultation with Tribal Nation on how 22 the distribution of such reductions in force to 23 minimize the harms to tribal nations and our 24 students prior to implementation. 25 I thank you for the time.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p> <p>1 Some of the other areas that need to be 2 addressed on that as well is because of the 3 reduction in force act, those people that are placed 4 on administrative leave are still occupying a space 5 where the school and/or BIE cannot hire because they 6 still have those spots filled. We need to really 7 look at where BIE is going and to use more staff in 8 a better use of BIE funds and the fulfillment of 9 legal responsibilities include allowing the dollars 10 be allocated more efficiently. 11 That includes the breakdown between those 12 higher education institutions where it appears that 13 there is not an adequate funding formula, which is 14 one of those areas that have been asked for many 15 times. Hiring staff would eliminate waste by 16 ensuring BIE facilities are well maintained and safe 17 and that BIE human resources have safe and healthy 18 workplaces. 19 We saw the firing at Haskell, eliminating 20 staff made the campuses substantially less safe. 21 Hiring staff would eliminate waste by allowing 22 monitoring or financial accountability. We know 23 that numerous federal reports indicate that funds 24 are not adequately dispersed or monitored due to 25 inadequate staffing and say that in order to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p> <p>1 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Chairman. 2 Next, I'll call upon Chairman Tehassi 3 Hill. 4 MR. HILL: All right. Thank you. (Native 5 language spoken.) 6 Greetings, everyone, Tehassi Hill, Oneida 7 Nation. Thanks for the opportunity to provide 8 comments. The Oneida Nation's relationship with the 9 Bureau of Indian Education reflects a broader shift 10 from federal assimilation policy toward tribal self- 11 determination, enabling the integration of Oneida 12 language, history, and culture into education. This 13 evolution is grounding a longstanding federal trust 14 responsibility affirmed through key legislation such 15 as the Civilization Fund Act of 1819, the Indian 16 Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 17 1975, and the Tribally Controlled Schools Acts of 18 1988. 19 The Oneida Nation school system is a 20 tribally controlled school that began in 1979. Our 21 school system serves birth to five years old, early 22 childhood program through high school students. 23 As for question number one, our response 24 is administration must prioritize the delivery of 25 services and funding, tribal country is mandated by</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p> <p>1 the trust and treaty obligations. Tribally 2 controlled schools operate under their own 3 government structures and exercise local decision- 4 making authority under the tribally controlled 5 school acts and is to remain deeply dependent on the 6 BIE central office for timely and accurate delivery 7 of federal funds, technical assistance, and 8 programming support.</p> <p>9 The success of the school not only relies 10 on tribal governments, but also on the 11 functionality, stability, and capacity of BIE. BIE 12 central office staff are critical to ensure that 13 tribally controlled schools receive funds, 14 approvals, and support that they're legally entitled 15 to.</p> <p>16 Employee turnover at central office has a 17 direct downstream effect on tribally controlled 18 school system operations. Consistent turnover leads 19 to knowledge gaps and consistent interpretation of 20 policy and increased delay in funding distributions. 21 Schools often face confusion or duplicative 22 paperwork due to changing points of contact or 23 evolving guidance from new staff.</p> <p>24 Every time a grant officer, budget 25 analyst, or facilities reviewer leaves, the school</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p> <p>1 a process audit to identify and eliminate 2 redundancies in approvals, reviews, and 3 documentation requirements. Develop clear 4 standardized templates and guidance documents to 5 reduce confusion of paperwork for schools. 6 Introduce and scale digital tools to automate 7 routine tasks such as status tracking, document 8 submissions, and communication workflows.</p> <p>9 BIE should improve communication and 10 responsiveness by designate consistent points of 11 contacts for each school or region to build 12 relationships and minimize confusion, establish 13 service level agreements or response time benchmarks 14 for funding actions and technical support, hold 15 regular coordination calls or updates between BIE 16 and central office and tribally controlled schools 17 to align on priorities, address emerging issues, and 18 consult on administrative burden and access 19 barriers.</p> <p>20 As for the second question, our response, 21 the federal government has a duty to make education 22 funding systems for native students as strong, 23 transparent, and accessible as those supporting any 24 other public schools in America. Funding education 25 systems are a trust and treaty obligation. Lane</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p> <p>1 they serve loses valuable time and institutional 2 memory requiring repeated explanations, document 3 resubmissions and delays. A streamlined stable 4 system with long-term well-trained staff is 5 essential for timely and efficient service delivery. 6 Investing in professional development and retention 7 strategies for the central office personnel reduces 8 backlogs, increase clarity, and enhance the trust 9 between BIE and the schools it supports. Cross- 10 training and succession planning are vital to 11 prevent bottlenecks when inevitable transitions 12 occur.</p> <p>13 When employees leave systems, not just 14 individuals must be prepared to carry forward that 15 knowledge without disruption. Streamlining the 16 internal processes, reducing duplicative reviews, 17 and leveraging technology will empower central 18 office staff to serve more schools with greater 19 consistency and fewer errors, especially important 20 as demand grows under self-governance models.</p> <p>21 We make the recommendation BIE should 22 facilitate joint learning opportunities with 23 tribally controlled school staff to foster mutual 24 understanding and alignment. BIE should streamline 25 the processes and increase efficiency by conducting</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 29</p> <p>1 funding is a disruption in native children's 2 education. Federal government should prioritize 3 addressing overly burdensome federal reporting 4 processes and streamline technology. Nowhere in our 5 compacts or agreements is there a requirement for 6 payment-by-payment justification as a condition of 7 federal funds. Tribe should be exempt from the 8 treasury's new ASAP justification rules for payment 9 requests instead should be released in a lump sum at 10 the beginning of the year as required by ISDEAA.</p> <p>11 In addition, payment platforms and 12 tracking systems should be consistent, easy to use, 13 easy to access, and allow tribal nations to track 14 every dollar they're owed and where payments are in 15 real time. The proposed 70 percent cut to BIE 16 construction in fiscal year '26 is not a trim, it's 17 a crisis. Over 60 schools remain in poor condition 18 with over six billion in replacement needs and 800 19 million in deferred maintenance. Construction now 20 means canceling projects, closing unsafe buildings, 21 and forcing students into overcrowded, deteriorating 22 facilities. BIE schools cannot operate without safe 23 classrooms, working infrastructure and stable 24 funding.</p> <p>25 The Oneida Nation has utilized its own</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 30</p> <p>1 tribal contribution to fulfill the funding that BIE 2 is lacking. Annually, the nation contributes tribal 3 contribution funding to the school system makes up 4 33 percent of their tribal budget, their total 5 budget. 6 We make the following recommendations. 7 The president's budget should include advanced 8 appropriations for Indian Affairs. Tribes should be 9 exempt from the new payment justification 10 requirement in the automated standard application 11 for payment systems, which is the system that tribes 12 receive their compacted ISDEAA funds from the 13 Department of Interior. 14 Interior should work with the treasury to 15 issue guidance that funds negotiated and agreed upon 16 in ISDEAA agreements as excluded from the ASAP 17 justification requirement. BIE should implement and 18 update payment plan platforms that allow for 19 awarding officials to process approvals more quickly 20 and allows tribal nations to track the process of 21 receiving their funds and to create a tribal 22 advisory council on grants and program access to 23 provide ongoing input into the systems, reform and 24 pilot new approaches. 25 Funding notices and denials should be sent</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 32</p> <p>1 federal government. If the federal government 2 shifts educational responsibilities to tribes 3 without full funding, it is not self-determination. 4 It is a slow-moving form of termination through 5 defunding. 6 Outdated Indian affairs technology system 7 hampers self-determination, self-governance. Tribal 8 nations need modernization for outdated and 9 mismatched financial distribution and tracking 10 systems to ensure timely access to critical 11 information and efficient funding distributions. 12 The financial business and management system and the 13 self-governance database at OSG need to be 14 modernized to ensure transfer of funds are monitored 15 throughout the process that the tribal nations can 16 easily access information on those sources of funds 17 transferred to them. 18 Complex and unnecessary processes also get 19 in the way of self-determination and self- 20 governance. Self-governance compacts and annual 21 funding agreements are legally binding contracts, 22 documents negotiated on a government-to-government 23 basis, which outlines the conditions and the funding 24 amounts for tribal programs. 25 Nowhere in our compacts and agreements is</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 31</p> <p>1 to tribes from the appropriate department for all 2 funding requests in a timely manner. Contract 3 support costs should be paid 100 percent at the 4 beginning of the fiscal year. Tribes incur these 5 costs throughout the year and should not have to 6 wait until the end of the fiscal year to receive the 7 final 20 percent. Reconciliation can occur at the 8 end of the year to confirm annual salary data. 9 As for question three, tribes that operate 10 their own school system through the Tribally 11 Controlled Schools Act of 1988 and the Indian Self- 12 Determination Education Assistance Act must be fully 13 supported with resources, technical assistance, and 14 flexibility necessary to succeed. Supporting self- 15 governance and education means ensuring that 16 tribally controlled schools are not burdened with 17 funded mandates, delayed payments, or bureaucratic 18 obstacles. Insufficient federal funding for tribal 19 -- tribal programs hurt tribal nation's ability to 20 assume service delivery through self-governance and 21 self-determination agreements. 22 Underfunded education compacts and 23 contracts force tribes to cut teachers, delay school 24 repairs, and scale back student services undermining 25 the native control over native education in the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 33</p> <p>1 their requirement for pay-by-pay justification as a 2 condition to receive funds. UI should ensure that 3 self-determination, self-governance are integrated 4 and understood throughout DOI so that self- 5 governance is not isolated to and only understood by 6 a handful of staff working in the office of self- 7 governance. Better communication between OSG and 8 other DOI offices is needed. 9 We recommend the following. In 10 collaboration with tribal nations, DOI should 11 evaluate processes associated with self- 12 determination and self-governance to identify 13 opportunities to streamline and improve 14 efficiencies. DOI should modernize outdated 15 technology and financial systems at Indian Affairs, 16 including the office self-governance database to 17 ensure approval and transfer of funds to tribes are 18 done timely and to allow tribal nations to easily 19 access information on the source of funds. DOI 20 should clearly clarify immediately that self- 21 governance funds are exempt from recently 22 established ASAP requirements for draw down 23 justifications. 24 In conclusion, the mission of our tribally 25 controlled school as follows, the Oneida Nations</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 34</p> <p>1 school system will be a learning system of choice 2 for our children by embracing the guiding principles 3 that all young people have limitless potential. The 4 Oneida Nation will continue to advocate for its 5 children's education. The success of our tribally 6 controlled school has produced more than 225 7 graduates in the past decade. 8 Oneida Nation school system has created 9 386 regional jobs, 126 being direct positions. By 10 having our school system, the Oneida Nation saves 11 local taxpayers of Brown and Oneida counties \$6 12 million according to a 2018 economic impact study. 13 Cutting BIE funds would not only be detrimental to 14 Oneida families, but the surrounding tax paying 15 community as well. The Oneida Nation strongly 16 encourages that any reforms in Indian education 17 including funding changes, restructuring, or 18 workforce policy shifts must be developed through 19 meaningful government-to-government consultation. 20 Thank you for your time. 21 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Chairman. 22 Before I move to our next commenter, I 23 want to ask once again, if there are any tribal 24 leaders or representatives that would like to give 25 comment, please do raise your hand. You can do so</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 36</p> <p>1 Bloomington. I see some of the BIE folks that we 2 saw yesterday. So I made comments yesterday, so 3 I'll let those stand on the record. 4 But I did want to just add one thing about 5 what I talked about yesterday, and that was that the 6 proposed cuts, even in the skinny budget that were 7 proposed for the tribal colleges could mean anywhere 8 from approximately 40 percent cuts to our bread-and- 9 butter funding for tribal colleges. 10 And so yesterday somebody in that meeting 11 mentioned how there was a hanging in Mankato in the 12 1800s in Minnesota. It was the largest mass hanging 13 in U.S. history. There was 38 people, tribal 14 members, natives, hanged who were starving to death. 15 They were supposed to get food from the U.S. 16 government, and they were left starving, and the 17 money -- the food was being taken by soldiers and 18 the government process. And so the natives never 19 got food. 20 So they went out looking for food. They 21 ended up coming across a farm and they were trying 22 to get some chickens and there was a fight with the 23 farmer. The farmer died, and so they rounded up 250 24 natives, men, women, and children set to be hanged. 25 And they sent those to Abraham Lincoln, and he cut</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 35</p> <p>1 by clicking the "Raise hand" function at the bottom 2 of your Zoom screen. 3 And seeing that I have only one hand 4 raised, I'll then open the room further for any 5 interested party to raise your hand and provide 6 comment as well. 7 So with that, I'm going to turn to Dan 8 King and you're welcome -- we'll be unmuting you and 9 you're welcome to turn on your camera if you would 10 like to be seen on Zoom. And you can go ahead and 11 give your comment. 12 MR. KING: Can you hear me okay? 13 MS. BEAUREGARD: Yeah. 14 MR. KING: Okay. Yeah, my camera isn't 15 functioning right now, and I have limited cell 16 coverage, so I don't want to use the camera. 17 But I just wanted to say (Native language 18 spoken) to everybody. I'm Dan King. I am the 19 hereditary chief from the Red Lake Nation on the 20 tribal council, and I'm also the president of the 21 Red Lake Nation College. So I'm speaking today on 22 behalf of our tribal college and part of one of the 23 38 AHEC tribal colleges throughout the country. 24 So I was there yesterday. I thought we 25 had a lot of good comments down in Minneapolis, in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p> <p>1 it down to 29 or 38. So there was 38 that were 2 eventually hanged, all men. 3 And there was a public -- it was like 4 public entertainment. There was 30,000 people that 5 were selling popcorn and, you know, stuff like that 6 like little trinkets and, you know, it was a big 7 celebration. So there were massacres like that 8 throughout all of our history. If you go to all 9 these tribes that are on board, everybody has a 10 story like that from their area. 11 And somebody was saying how this feels 12 like a new thing. And I was thinking, yeah, it's 13 like a funding massacre. This is a funding massacre 14 where if we were to take 40 percent off of tribal 15 colleges who need this funding to survive, it's 16 going to be just like what happened to SIPI and 17 Haskell. And that's a good example of what would 18 happen because there were layoffs, teachers were 19 laid off, staff were laid off, and the students 20 couldn't go to school. It was devastation in a very 21 short amount of time, and that didn't take long. 22 That was only a few weeks of unable to pay people 23 and people being let go. 24 So this would be like a funding massacre 25 for all the tribal colleges, and one of the biggest</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p> <p>1 support systems and one of the only support systems 2 for higher education for natives in these rural 3 areas are the tribal colleges. We serve this unique 4 market niche that nobody else serves, native 5 communities, rural communities, the most rural in 6 the country, and this would be a devastating cut. 7 So I just wanted to highlight what would happen if 8 these cuts are allowed. 9 And that really should never happen 10 because we can't look at this like a DOGE or a 11 diversity, equity and inclusion. We're not like 12 blacks or Hispanics or any of these groups or any 13 other budget. We're different because we have that 14 legal trust responsibility and relationship with the 15 U.S. government through our treaties and acts of 16 Congress. 17 So the Supreme Court, which has set 18 precedent, which says that the U.S. has charged 19 itself with the moral obligations of the highest 20 responsibility and trust, and this is legally 21 enforceable. It's a fiduciary obligation to protect 22 the tribal treaty rights, which include education, 23 healthcare, economic opportunity, and quality of 24 life. We gave up millions of acres of land. Like 25 our tribe, for example, we gave up 11 million acres</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p> <p>1 just part of the budget that, oh, let's cut that 40 2 percent, let's cut that 40 percent. Yeah, you can 3 do this with other federal agencies maybe, but with 4 ours, these have to be supported because of what we 5 gave up in those treaties. So this is a promise, a 6 trust, and we even call our land trust land. Think 7 about that, trust land, that's trust that the U.S. 8 government had promised to provide in what we gave 9 up millions of acres, which is now the United 10 States, which wouldn't even exist if it weren't for 11 these treaties. 12 So if it comes down to it, there will be a 13 lawsuit, and I know you guys who worked for the BIA 14 and BIE, you're limited in that your eventual boss 15 is the president in the administration. But what 16 you can do is report to them that these tribes are 17 serious. These are in the treaties, and this should 18 be provided, this funding. If not, then there's 19 going to be a whole bunch of lawsuits, and those 20 lawsuits are killers too because then they take time 21 and they take our funding that we already don't 22 have, but we'll do it if we have to. 23 And then in the end, when we win those, 24 we'll get our legal costs back. So we'll get that 25 back, but we'll be in a survival mode while all this</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p> <p>1 in our treaty with the U.S. government. We still 2 have one million left, but we gave up 11 million 3 acres. 4 So overall, tribes have given up 98 5 percent of their land in these treaties. So we're 6 not asking for any free stuff. We're not asking for 7 handouts. This is all part of what our ancestors 8 gave up to make sure that we're here today. So now 9 it's our job as AHEC, tribal college presidents, 10 leaders of schools, tribal leaders to make sure that 11 this doesn't happen again. 12 We can't allow that funding massacre to 13 take away what we have and what we need to keep for 14 our children and our seven generations ahead. This 15 is our battle. And so we're going to keep fighting 16 that battle, and we're going to let everybody know 17 that we are still here and those treaties do matter 18 and they are legally enforceable. And if needed, 19 red Lake Nation College, Red Lake, and I'm sure 20 there are many other tribes who aren't going to take 21 this laying down. We can't. So if forced, we will 22 sue and we will win this damn case because we have 23 it in the treaties, we have it in the acts of 24 Congress, and these have to be supported. 25 We're not like another group. We're not</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p> <p>1 is happening. But it's all unnecessary. If we just 2 have the dialogue that is required and should 3 happen, we should be able to work all this out. But 4 I know there's limited time because those budgets 5 are already done. We already know that the skinny 6 budget, the cuts are already there. 7 And so a lot of people are saying, well, 8 this is a bunch of waste of time. They're not 9 listening to us. This is just checking the box. 10 This is just saying, well, let's say we met with the 11 tribes and we'll do these meetings for a few weeks 12 and we can say we did that. That's not the case 13 because in the end, that funding is really needed. 14 And so if there are 40 percent cuts and we 15 have all this devastation and we have these 16 lawsuits, and in the end we're going to win those 17 anyway. But why go through that? Why not just work 18 this out? And there's other parts of the budget 19 that can be adjusted for these cuts. When you look 20 at our -- there's three billion in the BIE budget. 21 There's about a billion and BIE -- BIE is one 22 billion and BIA is about three billion. We're 23 talking about \$4 billion for all of the land in the 24 U.S.A. basically. The U.S.A. wouldn't exist if it 25 weren't for these treaties, and we're quibbling</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p> <p>1 about that.</p> <p>2 So there should be no cuts to our funding.</p> <p>3 We should get the regular increases that were</p> <p>4 promised in previous years. And the AHEC has all</p> <p>5 those specific numbers of what we request and what</p> <p>6 we need. But I wanted to make those comments</p> <p>7 because that's what we need to be focused on is the</p> <p>8 practical reality of getting the funding to all the</p> <p>9 tribal colleges and the tribal schools that need it.</p> <p>10 Thank you for your time.</p> <p>11 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Chief.</p> <p>12 So I see we have about 150 people online.</p> <p>13 If there are any attendees who would like to provide</p> <p>14 comment, please do raise your hand. And just a</p> <p>15 reminder that we will unmute you when it is your</p> <p>16 turn, and you're welcome to turn on your camera when</p> <p>17 you provide comment if you wish.</p> <p>18 Shawna Bicenti, you can go ahead.</p> <p>19 MS. BICENTI: (Native language spoken).</p> <p>20 Thank you so much for this opportunity to provide</p> <p>21 comment.</p> <p>22 (Native language spoken).</p> <p>23 I am here to provide oral comment in</p> <p>24 regards to the work efficiency and productivity, the</p> <p>25 executive order 14210. And it really -- the number</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p> <p>1 provide even basic services to tribally controlled</p> <p>2 schools or tribal schools.</p> <p>3 The March 2025 workforce reduction</p> <p>4 programs resulted in the loss of 969 staff across</p> <p>5 Indian Affairs, including five regional directors,</p> <p>6 an estimate of 40 percent workforce reduction in</p> <p>7 total. These cuts are being framed as efficiency</p> <p>8 reform, but we're producing real measurable harm,</p> <p>9 including delayed title funding distributed for</p> <p>10 schools in Arizona, New Mexico, South Dakota,</p> <p>11 impacting 15,060 teachers, as well as this current</p> <p>12 reduction of 95 percent of funding for this upcoming</p> <p>13 year.</p> <p>14 Any proposal to implement a reduction in</p> <p>15 force, a RIF at BIE would deeply irresponsible and</p> <p>16 indirect conflict with the federal government's</p> <p>17 treaty obligations. So when we think about what is</p> <p>18 tribal self-determination and education, well,</p> <p>19 Navajo Preparatory School, which I am the head of</p> <p>20 school of Navajo Preparatory School and also a</p> <p>21 graduate of Navajo Preparatory School, we prove that</p> <p>22 tribal self-determination in education is</p> <p>23 successful.</p> <p>24 Navajo Preparatory School is a tribally</p> <p>25 controlled school under public law 100-297 and is a</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p> <p>1 one -- to answer question number one, treaty and</p> <p>2 trust responsibility must guide any reorganization.</p> <p>3 The United States has a legal and moral obligation</p> <p>4 to educate native students as guaranteed in over 370</p> <p>5 ratified treaties. The United States Constitution,</p> <p>6 federal statutes like the Indian Self-Determination</p> <p>7 and Education Assistance Act, public law 93638, and</p> <p>8 the landmark cases such as Worcester versus Georgia,</p> <p>9 1832.</p> <p>10 These obligations are not discretionary.</p> <p>11 Proposals to downsize, consolidate, restructure</p> <p>12 Indian Affairs, particularly the Bureau of Indian</p> <p>13 Education, must begin and end with honoring this</p> <p>14 federal trust responsibility. And as stated, and I</p> <p>15 truly appreciate the comments from Dan King,</p> <p>16 reductions in BIE staffing and services would</p> <p>17 directly violate these promises and undermine</p> <p>18 generations, a policy built on tribal self-</p> <p>19 determination and educational equity.</p> <p>20 When we look at question number two, we're</p> <p>21 discussing the situation where we already know BIE</p> <p>22 is severely understaffed and cannot afford any</p> <p>23 further cuts. BIE is currently operating at less</p> <p>24 than 50 percent of its required staffing capacity.</p> <p>25 Further reductions would cripple its ability to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p> <p>1 successful example of self-determination under</p> <p>2 public law 93638. Navajo Prep serves native</p> <p>3 students from across 110 Navajo chapters and beyond,</p> <p>4 offering a culturally grounded academically rigorous</p> <p>5 program as an international baccalaureate world</p> <p>6 school.</p> <p>7 Our results speak volumes. Our graduation</p> <p>8 rate is 94 percent or higher since 2020. 100</p> <p>9 percent of 2024 graduates are accepted into four-</p> <p>10 year colleges. 60 percent of our class of 2018</p> <p>11 attended college and completed a degree within six</p> <p>12 years, well above national averages for native</p> <p>13 students. This success is driven by Navajo Prep's</p> <p>14 ability to operate under tribal authority,</p> <p>15 incorporate the language and culture, and design</p> <p>16 programs responsive to community needs.</p> <p>17 Federal policies must protect and expand</p> <p>18 this model, not threaten it with budget cuts or</p> <p>19 administrative restructuring. If we really to look</p> <p>20 at some efficiencies and where they lie, let's look</p> <p>21 at DFMC, not BIE. BIE oversees 82 percent of all</p> <p>22 Indian Affairs facilities, including over 1,800</p> <p>23 school buildings, but lacks the authority to manage</p> <p>24 construction projects over 5 million due to internal</p> <p>25 Department of Interior policies, not statute.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p> <p>1 The division of facilities management and 2 construction has consistently mismanaged school 3 construction and deferred maintenance resulting in 4 over one billion in deferred maintenance backlog, 5 over eight billion in unmet school construction 6 needs, excessive delays, costs, overruns, and lack 7 of transparency. Schools like us, Navajo Prep, we 8 experience long wait times, incomplete projects, no 9 visibility into timeline or budgets due to DFMC's 10 centralized or pick processes.</p> <p>11 The solution is not to downsize BIE, but 12 to transfer construction and maintenance authority 13 from DFMC to BIE, raise BIE's Project Authority 14 ceiling to 250 million and fully staff its project 15 oversight teams.</p> <p>16 If we look at -- and we're looking at the 17 consolidation of services violating educational 18 expertise and tribal autonomy, that would be the 19 result in this order. We have to remember that 20 tribally controlled schools operate under distinct 21 legal framework and require dedicated BIE personnel 22 with expertise in public law 93638 contracts, public 23 law 100-297 grants, Title VI in Indian education, 24 Johnson-O'Malley, IDEA Part B, and impact aid, 25 proposals to consolidate Indian Affairs functions,</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p> <p>1 and students for BIE schools versus the 16,080 2 that's the national average to the 25,000 for 3 students of DoDEA schools.</p> <p>4 Tribally controlled schools, we cannot let 5 -- levy local taxes. We cannot issue bonds. We 6 rely solely on federal appropriations with no 7 fallback options. Therefore, mandatory forward 8 funding is needed for the Indian School Equalization 9 Program, operation and maintenance, tribal grants 10 support costs, school safety personnel and 11 transportation.</p> <p>12 Navajo Prep, being one of the most 13 successful schools in the BIE system receives no 14 dedicated funding for technology, infrastructure, or 15 broadband upgrades. Our final recommendations is to 16 halt all workforce reductions or RIFs targeting BIA 17 or Indian Affairs.</p> <p>18 Two, transfer school construction deferred 19 maintenance authority from DFMC to BIE, raising 20 project limits and adding construction oversight 21 staff.</p> <p>22 Three, exempt BIE from consolidation 23 efforts preserve dedicated staffing and tribal 24 education programs.</p> <p>25 Four, forward fund ISEP, tribally grants</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p> <p>1 finance IT, HR communications into department-wide 2 structures will erode program specific knowledge and 3 reduce access and delay response times.</p> <p>4 Indian education should not be treated 5 like a generic program. It is a treaty 6 responsibility as you've been hearing over and over 7 and over from all of these tribal consultations. 8 BIE must remain an independent, specialized tribally 9 focused agency.</p> <p>10 Tribally controlled schools like Navajo 11 Prep face deep funding inequities. The BIE funding 12 algorithm is outdated and does not account for the 13 needs of 21st century education. The BIE is funding 14 schools through an outdated model. No longer do 15 students bring pencils and papers and we give them a 16 calculator to learn. We do not use overhead 17 projectors. We use smart boards and digital 18 displays.</p> <p>19 To ensure our students and community has 20 access to critical educational opportunities, we 21 provide laptops, WIFI, et cetera. The BIE is 22 funding our schools like it's 1950. We're getting 23 pennies on the dollar. For example, BIE schools 24 receive less than half the national average in pupil 25 per pupil funding. The 7,000 weighted student unit</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p> <p>1 control costs, operations and maintenance, increase 2 Title VI that's dedicated to language preservation 3 and supportive language, safety funding to align 4 with needs.</p> <p>5 Five, support tribally controlled schools 6 like Navajo Prep as model of success, and expand our 7 autonomy to execute construction and program 8 delivery locally.</p> <p>9 Six, create a native education 10 infrastructure task force to oversee reform across 11 Department of Interior ED and USDA to improve inter- 12 agency coordination for tribally controlled schools. 13 (Native language spoken). Thank you so 14 much for this opportunity.</p> <p>15 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Shawna.</p> <p>16 If there is anyone else online currently 17 who would like to provide comment, please raise your 18 hand.</p> <p>19 Charles Cuny, go ahead, and if you would 20 like, you can put yourself on camera.</p> <p>21 MR. CUNY: Good morning, everybody. Can 22 you hear me okay?</p> <p>23 My name's Charles Cuny. I am the 24 development director for Little Wound School, a 25 member of the Oglala Sioux tribe, located on the</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p> <p>1 Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in Southwestern South 2 Dakota.</p> <p>3 So I'll just speak briefly to just kind of 4 echo what Shawna Bicenti mentioned regarding tribal 5 grant schools and the impact of the current forecast 6 of the future of the downsize of the Department of 7 Interior, the real effects that we are feeling at 8 the grassroots level of the school.</p> <p>9 Number one, a school like Little Wound 10 School is, you know, 99 percent -- basically, we 11 require fall on close to 100 percent federal 12 funding. So any deficit in that flow of funding 13 impacts it. So right now as a school, we don't have 14 our title funding, we don't have our operation and 15 maintenance funding. These are hold set-asides that 16 the bureau holds. Those fundings aren't coming in 17 as they normally do. As a school, we've taken 18 action to downsize our operational costs.</p> <p>19 But I think it's important to understand 20 just what Shawna said. BIE schools, we operate on a 21 very thin margin line. Any downsizing in our budget 22 is in effect going to set us backwards. And I echo 23 what the tribal president said. You know, we as 24 tribal grant schools are counting our pennies and 25 are going to put up a legal fight and stand on our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p> <p>1 construction, inflation increases. And then we also 2 look at the uncertainty of title funding, language 3 grants, project aware grants. So all those things 4 are very concerning.</p> <p>5 Thank you for your time, and I wish you 6 all the best of luck in the future.</p> <p>7 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Charles.</p> <p>8 Next have Chris Caldwell. We'll go ahead 9 and unmute you, and you're welcome to turn on your 10 camera if you wish.</p> <p>11 MR. CALDWELL: (Native language spoken). 12 Good morning, everyone. My name is Chris Caldwell. 13 I'm an enrolled tribal member with the Menominee 14 Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, and I currently serve as 15 president at the College of Menominee Nation.</p> <p>16 I just wanted to start off by saying I 17 appreciate and support the statements of our tribal 18 leaders who started us off and especially to my 19 fellow TCU President, President King.</p> <p>20 I did want to also start off by just 21 saying that the -- and this was in some of the 22 comments, highlighting that telling us to help 23 develop ideas for workforce efficiency and 24 productivity does not make sense when the workforce 25 and services provided has already been historically</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p> <p>1 638 and 10297 law.</p> <p>2 In terms of construction for the Great 3 Plains region, we have a number of schools in the 4 top five. In terms of school replacement, it's 5 taken 10 to 20 years for these schools to get on 6 this list, and for the administration to come in and 7 say, hold up all projects, we're going to revamp 8 things, we're going to reshuffle the deck, I really 9 think that's unfair to the tribes that have the 10 right to take those projects.</p> <p>11 So I know there's a lot of people that 12 want to speak today, but I would just keep that in 13 mind and continue the good fight. And I would -- 14 you know, I would also think that the BIE, 15 Department of Interior Government, their services to 16 the tribal nations can be better. We all understand 17 that, but there's also the process of the actual 18 funds exchanging hands and who's actually doing 19 that.</p> <p>20 And as tribes, we have the ability to take 21 on those funds and manage them, but they're also -- 22 we have to recognize the current funding mechanism 23 is not sufficient. The regulations are so 24 overbearing that it's almost ridiculous to move a 25 project forward as we continue to face delays in</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p> <p>1 inadequate. Some of the recommendations you've 2 already heard are saying the opposite, that rather 3 than continuing to reduce the workforce is to look 4 at how do we strengthen that workforce and filling 5 vacancies that had been existing prior to January 6 18th, helping to identify the needs of tribes that 7 are not being met prior to even this, the reductions 8 that happened this spring semester.</p> <p>9 I would say with the Menominee Indian 10 Tribe of Wisconsin, we did work together earlier 11 when the funding cuts came for Haskell and SIPI 12 because we saw that as a frontline effort that they 13 were more easily impacted by this because they're 14 federal employees, federal institutions. And so we 15 supported that reinstatement of those positions and 16 those services, and we continue to support that.</p> <p>17 But you know, overall for us, it's the 18 work of TCU is rooted in tribal sovereignty and 19 trust responsibility as you've heard. And the work 20 we do is successful because we were created and 21 designed by our tribal nations and peoples. And 22 this success does not look like mainstream higher 23 education institutions because at that time TCUs 24 were created, mainstream institutions were not 25 serving our people the way that we needed them to.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p> <p>1 And the impact that we've had since then, 2 for us at the College of Menominee Nation, we 3 recently released an economic impact study that 4 showed a \$16 million impact across our tribal nation 5 communities and the surrounding rural communities in 6 that we contribute to approximately 263 jobs in that 7 area. And so when we talk about cutting not only to 8 the positions and the restructuring of the agencies, 9 that will reduce our ability to do the work that we 10 need to do with the limited resources that we 11 already have. 12 And so in regard to that, I would just 13 recommend that we continue to look at a study, a 14 more measured approach to the structure that is 15 needed, and in the meantime, reestablish the 16 positions that were cut, bring back the necessary 17 employment and workforce to help provide services in 18 a timely manner -- in a more timely manner. And I 19 would also support that the recommendations provided 20 by American Indian Higher Education Consortium as 21 well as the National Indian Education Association in 22 regard to tribally controlled schools and colleges, 23 that that be taken into consideration with the 24 budgeting process. 25 And then just one final note that kind of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p> <p>1 will go on mute and come back in about 15 minutes. 2 Thank you. 3 Hi, Charlene Lucero, I see your hand 4 raised. We'll go ahead and unmute you, and you're 5 welcome to turn on your video if you wish and 6 provide your comment. 7 MS. LUCERO: Hi, can you hear me? 8 MR. CLARK: Yes. 9 MS. LUCERO: All right. Let me see if I 10 can get myself situated. Give me one second. I'm 11 sorry. I'm trying to get my computer situated here. 12 Good morning, everyone. Charlene Lucero 13 here from the Department of Education here in the 14 Pueblo of Isleta. I'm speaking today on behalf of 15 the Pueblo of Isleta located in -- just south of 16 Albuquerque, New Mexico. 17 Can you hear me all right? 18 MR. CLARK: Yes. 19 MS. LUCERO: Okay. Great. 20 So I would like to offer comments on the 21 topics related to the workforce optimization 22 initiative, and there was this opportunity came, of 23 course, within the last month or so and we have some 24 feedback in reference to the timing of the 25 consultation and the different topics that have been</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p> <p>1 caps off, I heard someone mention this in the 2 comments. Previous -- recently, our CFO, Chief 3 Financial Officer, it took him three attempts to 4 write the correct language for the defend the spend 5 requirement in our funding portals to access the \$68 6 reimbursement. So when we talk about workforce 7 efficiency and productivity, those things, what 8 we've been through this spring semester, I highly 9 recommend that the BIE, BIA federal government do 10 not use that strategy or a continued form of that 11 strategy going forward. 12 So I thank you all for listening and hope 13 you all have a good rest of the day. 14 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Chris. 15 Do we have any other attendees who wish to 16 provide comment? If so, please raise your hand 17 And without any commenters at this time, 18 we will leave the line open, and I believe we will 19 check in maybe every 15 minutes or so. We'll share 20 in the chat if anyone wishes to provide comment, 21 please just click the button at the bottom of your 22 Zoom "Raise hand," and approximately every 15 23 minutes, we'll check on that and enable folks to 24 provide comment if they wish. 25 And if there's no one at this time, we</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p> <p>1 placed into -- jumbled into one section. I stayed 2 on a few days the other day and it's so many topics 3 around a wide arena. 4 But we object to three different 5 consultation topics into the single set of the 6 consultation opportunities. Tribal nations were 7 initially invited to consult on the BIE's workforce 8 efficiency and productivity related to executive 9 order 14210. 10 Thereafter, the department amended an 11 invitation to cover emergency permitting procedures 12 Interior developed to respond to the national energy 13 emergency, and that came afterward. The first topic 14 on the workforce reorganization alone merits the 15 department scheduling of eight separate consultation 16 sessions across five states. Attempting to cover 17 two additional topics, complicated and contentious 18 topics without any additional time, it inevitably 19 and severely reduces the quality of the 20 consultation. 21 One five-hour virtual consultation 22 dedicated to BIA is likewise insufficient, 23 especially since the devastating impacts of the 24 firing of probationary staff at the BIE have not 25 been fully discussed and that consultation only</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p> <p>1 includes vague nonspecific request. We request that 2 the department reschedule additional consultation 3 specific to the separate topics invited for the 4 consultation in the Dear Tribal Leader letters. 5 That includes clear prospective policies and 6 proposed procedures for the comment. 7 So that being said, the adequacy of 8 consultation, the pre-decisional, we want to remind 9 the department that adequate consultation must be 10 pre-decisional. It can't come thereafter. Notably, 11 the department took drastic action by firing at 12 least 72 employees at Haskell, SIPI, and the BIE 13 central office all without first consulting with 14 tribal nations on so-called "workforce efficiency." 15 The department has repeatedly failed to 16 uphold its consultation obligation to tribal 17 nations, and this consultation cannot right this 18 pathway. It cannot make things right. 19 Tribal nations, our members, our students 20 cannot undo the harms that the department 21 perpetuated onto our students. The impacts of the 22 firings of BIE professional staff were devastating. 23 We care deeply about the higher education 24 opportunities available to our tribal members and to 25 members across all nations. We were outraged that</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p> <p>1 not sufficiently considering the impacts of BIE 2 staff reductions. 3 In regards to the BIE workforce 4 optimization initiative consultation, the department 5 has presented tribal leaders with three questions 6 concerning efficiency, funding access, and tribal 7 self-determination. These questions ask broadly 8 what staffing changes would improve efficiency and 9 what funding structures and mechanisms could be 10 simplified, but BIE's pre-consultation actions 11 forecast an ultimate goal, fire as many staff as 12 possible, reduce staffing best as possible. 13 If BIE intends to repeat the cuts and 14 firings it attempted in February, it must first 15 consult with the tribal nations openly and candidly 16 laying out what kinds of staffing changes it is 17 proposing and engage tribal nations on a strategic 18 implementation of those changes to mitigate the 19 harms those changes will cause to tribal nations and 20 our students. 21 Regardless, BIE has invited tribal nations 22 consultation on staffing changes generally. The 23 Pueblo of Isleta supports hiring additional adequate 24 staff to fill BIA's many vacancies and the positions 25 left open by staff who declined reinstatement and</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p> <p>1 the danger our students were placed in, staff -- 2 when the staff were dismissed without any type of 3 action plan. 4 We really depend on these higher education 5 opportunities for our students to provide quality 6 education to our members, and by reducing the staff 7 by nearly 25 percent in SIPI and Haskell, our 8 students were left without toilet paper, dangerous 9 conditions, and many items were left unaddressed in 10 the dormitories and kind of jeopardizing the quality 11 of education that our students receive, limiting 12 food, just the welfare of the students and their 13 ability to function with these lack of resources. 14 The reductions in staff, the quality of 15 education sunk past acceptable levels, which is in 16 violation to our treaty rights. This is not a way 17 to treat our vulnerable population, our young 18 people. 19 We also observe that a planned hiring of 20 additional staff at Isleta Elementary School was 21 canceled and struggling to, you know, stretch 22 current staff or find staff who may not be in their 23 expertise area covering for other things is not a 24 way to provide quality education and support to our 25 students. We're concerned that this consultation is</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p> <p>1 for the numerous positions that the government -- 2 through the government's own admission are needed to 3 adequately serve our native students. 4 Research shows that efficiency, which BIE 5 states is one of its primary goals, will be by 6 increased hiring, not firing. We need efficient 7 interactions with tribes. The DTL states that 8 Indian Affairs remains committed to support the 9 efforts of executive order 14210 to be more 10 efficient without diminishing the current levels of 11 operational support and services to tribes. It also 12 asks what recommendations would you make to Indian 13 Affairs to improve efficiency through staffing 14 changes, resource sharing, process improvements, and 15 potential consolidation of programs and offices. 16 It is worth noting that BIE, as numerous 17 federal reports outline, currently does not have 18 enough staff to be efficient and is serving Indian 19 country and our students with only bare bones, 20 staff, and notably inadequate human resources and 21 facilities. The human resources department really 22 needs the support it needs to onboard staff, to do 23 the background checks, to do the work that they need 24 to bring people on. 25 Numerous federal reports demonstrate that</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p> <p>1 at BIE, efficiency would be best served through 2 additional staff. In 2014, the GAO report 15121 3 directed the revision of BIE strategic workforce 4 plan to ensure that BIE had adequate staff with 5 requisite knowledge and skills to effectively 6 oversee BIE school expenditures. That is hiring 7 staff would lead to better and more efficient 8 management and use of BIE funds, and we see that 9 that was proposed -- in 2014 was proposed for this 10 new realignment plan.</p> <p>11 BIE's capacity to address health and 12 safety issues by caused by deteriorating facilities 13 is needed to be addressed. We need to additionally 14 hire staff that will lead to better and more 15 efficient upkeep for BIE owned facilities and to 16 promote safe and healthy learning and working 17 environments. All students deserve a safe and 18 healthy work environment.</p> <p>19 In 2020, the GAO report 2358 directed BIE 20 to update its workforce plan to fill vacant 21 positions needed for BIE special education programs. 22 The GAO wrote BIE needs to address persistent 23 administrative capacity issues in special education 24 such as vacancies and a need for training in key 25 agency offices in order to fulfill its duties.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p> <p>1 legal duties.</p> <p>2 Firing staff will not eliminate, bloat, or 3 waste because BIA is not bloated. It is severity 4 understaffed. Any fiscal waste at BIA is clearly 5 attributable to that same understaffing. Firing 6 staff would inevitably diminish the current levels 7 of operational support to tribal nations. It would 8 also diminish the quality of education and the 9 educational support and opportunities offered to 10 tribal students in violation of the federal trust 11 responsibility, results that BIE claims in its DTLI 12 that it wants to avoid.</p> <p>13 The research and recommendations are 14 clear. More staff, not less, will lead to better 15 use of BIE funds and the fulfillment of their legal 16 responsibilities, including the trust 17 responsibility. Hiring staff would eliminate waste 18 by allowing monitoring of financial accountability. 19 Hiring staff would eliminate waste by promoting and 20 monitoring the delivery of special education 21 services required by law.</p> <p>22 In addition, hiring staff would eliminate 23 waste by ensuring that BIE facilities are well- 24 maintained and safe and that BIE's human resources 25 have safe and healthy workspaces among everyone</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p> <p>1 We see that our students suffer without 2 adequate and consistent services in special ed, and 3 our kids need access. In other words, hiring 4 additional staff, qualified staff, would promote 5 BIE's execution of its trust responsibility and 6 obligations under the individuals with the 7 Disabilities Education Act, DEA Act.</p> <p>8 In 2024, the GAO report 24105451 directed 9 the BIE to updated its strategic workforce plan and 10 to build its capacity to conduct an annual fiscal 11 review required by its policy. In other words, 12 hiring staff would promote fiscal accountability in 13 the bureau. And as recently as February 12, 2025, 14 the GAO reported that additional staffing was still 15 required to allow BIE to monitor school federal 16 spending and assist with their special education 17 programs.</p> <p>18 If the department and the bureau is truly 19 invested in efficient execution of the trust 20 responsibilities to our tribal nations and our 21 students, the department and bureau should heed the 22 advice that tribal nations, the GAO, and the Bureau 23 itself have forwarded for over a decade. Hiring 24 staff will promote responsible financial management 25 and ensure BIE moves closer to fulfilling all of its</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 65</p> <p>1 else.</p> <p>2 Administrative burdens to access 3 administer funding. Inadequate regional staff are 4 currently spread too thin to answer questions about 5 funding opportunities and grant applications. We 6 suggest hiring additional regional staff who can 7 support tribes in providing adequate documentation 8 for grant requests. We also look to -- and we need 9 support for tribes to promote self-determination and 10 self-governance, common topic.</p> <p>11 Reaffirm BIE's commitment to consult with 12 tribal nations about the secondary education and 13 post-secondary higher education programs and degree 14 offerings most needed by our communities and follow 15 tribal nation's leadership. The BIA runs an 16 elementary school, Isleta Elementary, on Isleta 17 reservation that is critical to the education of our 18 young people. It's one of the only elementary 19 schools within our community, and we do need it to 20 be here and to support what has been supported long 21 before.</p> <p>22 Our young people have expressed that they 23 experience racism and discrimination when accessing 24 other educational opportunities off the reservation. 25 Our elementary school provides critical culturally</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 66</p> <p>1 sensitive education to our children that needs 2 support, not less. 3 The Pueblo of Isleta educational 4 department supports and invests in our students at 5 multiple universities to include and have included 6 has school and SIPI, and we also, including through 7 our scholarships program, we provide tribal 8 advisement. Our students have described to us that 9 they fear educational future that lacks support 10 where they're unsupported and right now, they get 11 the support. But with cuts to our programming with 12 cuts in the BIE system, that's sure to decline as we 13 move forward. 14 But without even an assemblance of 15 stability Haskell, our students will not feel secure 16 enough to pursue those degree programs essential to 17 our self-determination and community health. The 18 Pueblo of Isleta has consulted with BIE about the 19 importance of developing and supporting degree 20 programs important to our nations and we can 21 honestly say that our consultation with SIPI and 22 Haskell to design programs that meet the unique 23 needs of our tribal nations has occurred. And we 24 look forward to working with them again and having 25 them be able to provide the support systems</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 68</p> <p>1 We'll go ahead and unmute you, and you're welcome to 2 turn on your camera if you wish. Go ahead. 3 MS. MARTINEZ-TOM: Thank you. And good 4 morning. My name's Chrystal Martinez-Tom, principal 5 at TóHajiilee Community School on the Navajo 6 Reservation. Thank you for the opportunity to speak 7 today about executive order 14210. 8 The topic I would like to talk about is 9 the restructuring of Indian Affairs to support more 10 efficient interactions with tribes, reducing 11 burdensome reporting requirements. So the first one 12 is I want to address the burdensome reporting 13 requirements imposed on our schools. 14 Bureau of Indian Education is imposing 15 unnecessary monitoring and reporting requirements on 16 tribally controlled schools. Fulfilling all these 17 requirements interferes with the primary mission to 18 provide quality education to our native children. 19 So much time is dedicated to ensuring that these 20 reporting requirements are completed and we're 21 neglecting our students, which should be first and 22 foremost our primary job for the day. So the intent 23 of the TCOSA is being undermined by the BIE's 24 additional layers administration leading to the 25 complexities that hinder effective collaboration</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 67</p> <p>1 necessary for them to come and serve our community. 2 We need additional consultation. In 3 closing, if the department or BIE determines despite 4 tribal input and the BIE and GAO's longstanding 5 positions on building, not diminishing capacity, 6 that BIE should nonetheless reduce its workforce, 7 BIA must disclose to all tribal nations the extent 8 of the cuts and conduct additional consultations 9 with tribal nations on how to distribute such 10 reductions to reductions in force to minimize the 11 harms to tribal nations and our students prior to 12 the implementation. 13 I appreciate your time. I appreciate the 14 work you're doing, and we strongly encourage you to 15 hear our words and to take it into account as you 16 move forward. We are here to stay, and we support 17 the effectiveness and efficiency of a strong BIE 18 federal program that works toward the 19 sustainability, the thriving community of our native 20 population. Thank you, again. 21 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Charlene. 22 As a reminder, if you would like to 23 provide comment, please click on the "Raise hand" 24 button at the bottom of your Zoom screen. 25 And we will move to Chrystal Martinez-Tom.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 69</p> <p>1 between BIE and tribally controlled schools. 2 The BIE should enhance communication 3 between its various offices and divisions so 4 relevant information for reporting purposes is 5 shared internally rather than requiring schools to 6 handle submitting new reporting requirements imposed 7 on them by various offices within BIE. 8 The other item is improving transparency 9 in the processes and response times to requests. 10 BIE could be more efficient by improving 11 transparency on how it operates responding to 12 requests for communication consultation with 13 tribally controlled schools more quickly, both on 14 policy issues and on administration, management, and 15 funding questions. Greater transparency and 16 education service delivery is essential for 17 improving outcomes and accountability. In 18 particular, we would like to see more clearly how 19 funding is allocated to BIE central and regional 20 offices that are not contributing to or responsive 21 to tribally controlled schools' requests and efforts 22 to improve student performance. 23 All too often these centralized BIE 24 offices interfere with the efforts of tribally 25 controlled schools by haphazardly requesting</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p> <p>1 unnecessary reports and information that the school 2 already provides through their required annual 3 reporting and audits. 4 Thank you for your time. 5 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Chrystal. 6 Do we have any other attendees who would 7 like to provide comment? If so, please raise your 8 hand. 9 I see Carol Norwood. We'll go ahead and 10 take you off mute, and you're free to turn on your 11 camera if you wish. Please go ahead. 12 MS. NORWOOD: Good morning, everybody. 13 (Native language spoken). My name is Carol Norwood, 14 the school business manager on the Navajo 15 Reservation located on Pinon, Arizona. The school 16 I'm representing is Pinon Community School, and I 17 would like to put in my share for the opportunity to 18 speak today about the executive order 14210, and 19 it's mainly primarily focused on Maximo. 20 Maximo has been a challenge for tribally 21 controlled grant school, and my recommendation is 22 the BIE could reevaluate the process for responding 23 to facilities and maintenance requests and to 24 establish and communicate a clear timeline for 25 responding to requests logged in Maximo system. The</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p> <p>1 Clear and timely process of maintenance requests and 2 transparent updates regarding the timeline and 3 potential roadblocks would allow school leaders to 4 effectively plan repairs while ensuring students 5 safely learning in the meantime. 6 As BIE's mission statement says, to 7 provide quality education opportunities for early 8 childhood through life in accordance what tribal 9 needs to cultural and economic wellbeing and keeping 10 with the wide diversity of Indian tribes and Alaskan 11 Native Village as district cultures and government 12 entities. With that in mind, I would like to 13 request BIE to again, thank you for the opportunity 14 in being able to voice our opinions in the executive 15 order, and I really truly hope that you do take this 16 into account. 17 I appreciate you being part of the Bureau 18 of Indian Education. (Native language spoken). 19 That's how I identify as a native woman to 20 my community, and again, thank you. 21 I'll go ahead and give the floor to Ms. 22 Sylvia Largo as well. 23 MS. LARGO: Good morning, this is Sylvia 24 Largo. I am the instructional leader assigned out 25 of TóHajiilee Community School. Can you guys hear</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p> <p>1 Maximo software is severely outdated, creating 2 challenges for users. It is almost remarkable, 3 difficult to navigate, and require schools time and 4 resources to train staff to use the software. 5 Additionally, data used within the system 6 is inaccurate, and the BIE has not kept the system 7 up to date. Long and unclear timelines negatively 8 impact schools and drive up the prices for 9 unnecessary services and repairs. The lack of 10 updates to the system results in excessive wait 11 times or services requests affecting our ability to 12 maintain safe and conducive learning environments. 13 For example, at Pinon Community School, 14 we've been without reliable heating system and no 15 central air conditioning for many years despite 16 subfreezing temperatures, blistering heat, while 17 students are housed in the dormitory and learning 18 during the day. 19 Administrative delays without clear 20 communication have extended the project timeline, 21 ballooning the budget and leaving school 22 administrators scrambling to cover the remaining 23 costs. Such delays not only impacts the delivery of 24 education services, but threatening the health and 25 safety of students who resides in these dormitories.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 73</p> <p>1 me okay? 2 MR. CLARK: Yes. 3 MS. LARGO: All right. Thank you for the 4 feedback. 5 In response to the executive order that 6 was issued, we do have some recommendations that 7 have to be considered specific to local control, and 8 we're asking that consideration being made so that 9 each of our member schools know we know best how to 10 serve our students. We've gotten to know them. 11 We've been digging into the lives of our kids, not 12 just through assessments, but really getting to meet 13 them and interacting with them, establishing 14 relationships with their families, and it's an 15 integral part of the community. Our schools know 16 each of our students and families, making them best 17 equipped so that we may develop curricula programs 18 and services that meet their educational unique 19 needs. 20 Similarly, our schools know how to respond 21 quickly in case of an emergency. We know the 22 families, we know the community, we know our staff, 23 so therefore, we can respond to each other's. Also, 24 we know how best to incorporate our indigenous 25 language and culture into our classrooms. We built</p>

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<p>1 on the educational environment that provides the 2 necessary structure for our children to flourish in 3 as they pursue their learning, their education so 4 they can become people who have established careers 5 in their communities and to continue life beyond 6 their community.</p> <p>7 Our school boards are knowledgeable. They 8 know, they are aware, and they respond and they are 9 always meeting the needs of their schools. They 10 take part of our schools and they're best equipped 11 to respond in a culturally relevant way that 12 promotes the effective delivery of education 13 services to our children. What's very unique to the 14 school board is they are focused on the learning 15 needs of the children.</p> <p>16 Also, any BIE changes should empower the 17 schools to manage their own affairs. It is an 18 integral part of the agreement that was made between 19 the U.S. government and the school board when 20 contracts were made based on public law 10297.</p> <p>21 Thank you.</p> <p>22 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Sylvia and 23 Carol.</p> <p>24 MS. ROSE: Good morning. There's a few of 25 us sitting here using Carol's computer. My name's</p>	<p>1 schools to be consolidated into a single 2 comprehensive grant report. This should be 3 respected, uncover all the federal funding resources 4 -- federal sources in order to enhance efficiency 5 and reduce the administrative burden on schools.</p> <p>6 Number four, excessive federal bureaucracy 7 intrusions and unauthorized added reporting 8 requirements diminish the positive impacts 9 envisioned by Congress and the Tribally Controlled 10 Schools Act ultimately hindering the ability of 11 local school administrators and staff from focusing 12 on their student needs.</p> <p>13 And number five, to effectively support 14 local control and advanced Indian education, the BIE 15 must reorient their direction of service and 16 accountability. BIE central and regional offices 17 need to be responsive to local school needs and 18 accountable for performance objectives identified by 19 schools at the local level.</p> <p>20 Thank you.</p> <p>21 Is that everybody now?</p> <p>22 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Marie Rose.</p> <p>23 Are there others with you, Carol?</p> <p>24 Okay. If there are any other attendees 25 who would like to provide comment, please raise your</p>
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<p>1 Marie Rose. I'm a principal at Tse Nitsaa Community 2 School on the Navajo Reservation, Pinon, Arizona. I 3 want to thank you for the opportunity to speak today 4 about executive order 14210, and today I also 5 represent tribally controlled schools and the Grant 6 School Association.</p> <p>7 On topic two, addressing current funding 8 structures including identifying efficiency barriers 9 to expedite funding to tribes and tribal programs.</p> <p>10 Number one, tribally controlled schools are dealing 11 with an inefficient reporting process. Instead of a 12 streamlined grant process, schools are burdened with 13 submitting multiple non-standardized reports to 14 various BIE offices, such as the Division of 15 Performance and Accountability and the Indian 16 Education Resource Centers. The bureaucracy has 17 ultimately reduced accountability in managing 18 federal funds allocated for Indian education.</p> <p>19 And number two, these cumbersome reporting 20 requirements divert valuable time and staffing 21 resources away from the school's mission and core 22 educational functions affecting the school's ability 23 to educate tribal children.</p> <p>24 And Congress has already provided for all 25 reporting requirements for tribally controlled</p>	<p>1 hand. You can do so by clicking the button at the 2 bottom of your Zoom screen, and otherwise, if there 3 are no commenters, we will be turning off our video 4 and audio and remaining on the line. And we'll 5 check in about 15 minutes, but you can go ahead and 6 raise your hand at any time.</p> <p>7 Thank you.</p> <p>8 MR. VINT: Rebecca, we have one more 9 commenter who's just put up their hand.</p> <p>10 MS. BEAUREGARD: Hi, Chrystal Martinez- 11 Tom, we'll go ahead and unmute you, and you can turn 12 on your video if you wish.</p> <p>13 MS. MARTINEZ-TOM: Good morning, again. 14 There is one more topic that I would like to include 15 as part of the consultation. Again, Chrystal 16 Martinez-Tom, TóHajiilee Community School in the 17 Navajo reservation, New Mexico.</p> <p>18 Increasing in affairs support for tribal 19 self-governance and self-determination, supporting 20 tribally controlled schools and control of Indian 21 education. BIE should support tribally controlled 22 schools by empowering school leaders. Local leaders 23 are crucial in identifying and developing curricula 24 that resonate with their community and children's 25 cultural backgrounds. They're best equipped to</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p> <p>1 understand and make decisions to meet their 2 community's unique education needs. 3 BIE should prioritize cultural integration 4 in education. Research indicates that integrating 5 cultural elements into curricula significantly 6 enhances academic performance by building upon 7 students' prior knowledge and fostering a deep 8 connection to their community and environment. This 9 culturally relevant approach in education allows our 10 native children to remain engaged in their education 11 while preserving and promoting the tribe's cultural 12 heritage. 13 In our community, we see firsthand how 14 culturally relevant education keeps native children 15 engaged and invested in their learning. It also 16 fosters great community and family engagement in the 17 learning process and helps grow student support 18 systems, and our school's cultural-based methods 19 address historic harmful education policies. This 20 represents a significant reversal of historical 21 federal policies that sought to suppress Indian 22 identity and culture. So we are promoting an 23 educational experience that aligns with and 24 celebrates our culture. 25 Improving native education outcome is</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p> <p>1 Technical University. I registered several times. 2 I was trying to shorten the type in, so that's why I 3 put El. Guy. Thank you for this opportunity. 4 I'm president of Navajo Technical 5 University, and I will be providing a written 6 statement to follow, but I just wanted to make a few 7 comments today. First, is that on June 1st, a 8 couple days from now, is an anniversary date for 9 Navajo Nation's Treaty of 157 years. And we've had 10 a long relationship with the federal government, and 11 in that treaty, basically our Navajo ancestors 12 agreed that we will put our children into school. 13 And the government agreed that they will put up a 14 classroom for every 30 students and provide 15 healthcare. And we've all understand that or 16 learned how ineffective the Bureau had provided that 17 process. 18 And I don't really want to go into that, 19 but I think the bottom line is from our end, we've 20 upheld our agreement. We've put our children in 21 school, and in the process, we've developed some 22 outstanding programs here, not only on Navajo but on 23 many Indian country. 24 And in particular, I'm going to speak a 25 little bit about the tribal colleges. In 2007,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p> <p>1 currently among the lowest and United States is 2 essential. Culturally relevant approaches are vital 3 to shaping positive educational experiences that 4 shape future leaders of Indian country. So 5 according to the statute, the federal government 6 supposed to work with tribes toward the goal of 7 providing the highest quality education, including 8 meeting the unique educational and cultural needs of 9 those children, responding to our request today with 10 real actions will work towards fulfilling this 11 obligation. 12 We affirm the unique ability of tribally 13 controlled schools to integrate cultural elements at 14 the local level. We are committed to working with 15 our federal education partners to meet these 16 cultural needs and education. 17 So again, I appreciate the time. and thank 18 you for the opportunity to provide a comment again 19 today. 20 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Chrystal. 21 Next, we have Elmer Guy. We will go ahead 22 and unmute you, and you're welcome to turn on your 23 video if you wish. 24 MR. GUY: Good morning and good afternoon. 25 My name is Elmer Guy. I'm president of Navajo</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 81</p> <p>1 Congress authorized the Higher Education Act through 2 an amendment to include provision for funds to 3 Navajo Technical University and United Tribes 4 Technical College located in Bismarck, North Dakota. 5 This act ensured consistent federal funding for 6 these two higher learning institutions. 7 The Bureau of Indian Education implemented 8 this legislation, failed to follow the formula, 9 providing funding to NTU, and I think Mr. Tony 10 Dearman is aware of this failure. And they had 11 given NTU less of that allocation, and they failed 12 to correct that mistake. This shows that the BIE 13 staff who provide vital technical assistance to 14 tribal colleges were already limited before the 15 Trump administration took office. 16 Higher education, specifically TCUs has 17 been overlooked in agency representation as there is 18 only one program analyst to provide support for all 19 of our 38 accredited tribal colleges and 20 universities. And I think the BIE also needs to 21 better educate their staff about the model of 22 education, workforce development and economic 23 development that is generating a high level of 24 success at NTU. 25 This goes to the heart of both BIE and the</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 82</p> <p>1 BIA's overall historical mission. What is happening 2 at NTU needs increased support since it will on the 3 long-term reduce some of the burden on the rest of 4 the federal government as it relates to 5 strengthening tribal communities. 6 You know, I was just thinking about these 7 consultations. Are they really meaningful? One of 8 the questions that comes to mind. The reason I say 9 that is there's a lot of fear out there, out here, 10 and people are afraid, you know, if they say 11 something, they'll get fired or they'll get 12 arrested. And so what we're bringing to your 13 attention today in some of these hearings that are 14 being held across the country is that what will you 15 do with our comments? Will you be able to provide 16 it to your superior, and what will you do with it? 17 I've heard many from our leaders, from our 18 school administrators that they are opposed to these 19 funding cuts. Are you going to do something about 20 restoring those, or is it going to land on deaf ears 21 and you're still going to make those decisions 22 regardless of what we say. And if you say 23 something, will you get fired or what? Those are 24 just some things that come to mind. 25 And then, you know, on one hand, we talked</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 84</p> <p>1 think we need to come to some agreement on how we 2 can move forward to produce engineers or registered 3 nurses, you know, people that would know about 4 cybersecurity and so forth. We all need those 5 professionals, and we just need to come together and 6 work together and address some of those. And many 7 of those programs are provided by tribal colleges 8 and universities. 9 And I don't want to take too much more of 10 your time since I'll be submitting a written 11 statement, but I just want to just mention those as 12 you conclude your hearing today. But thank you for 13 this opportunity. 14 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Elmer. 15 And I see Anna Sheppard with your hand 16 raised. We'll go ahead and unmute you, and you can 17 turn on your camera if you wish. Go ahead. 18 MS. SHEPPARD: Okay. Good morning. My 19 name is Anna Sheppard, and I'm an enrolled member of 20 the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe White Earth Band, and I 21 serve as the president of White Earth Tribal and 22 Community College. Thank you for the opportunity to 23 speak to you during this department of Interior 24 tribal consultation on the executive order 14210. 25 As the tribal nations continue to exercise</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 83</p> <p>1 about or you write out in your communication to us 2 that you want quality educational programs. On the 3 other hand, you practice something that is contrary 4 to that. For example, I don't know if it's still 5 the case, but with SIPI and Haskell, they were only 6 allowed to spend \$1 on their credit card. How can 7 you run a quality program with this \$1? They cannot 8 even fill their gas tank. Hopefully, that changed. 9 So I think we need to be careful of what 10 we say and what we do. We need to be careful with 11 our actions that we all know, you and I, we both 12 know that that is a bad policy, \$1 on a credit card. 13 And I don't know who's making up those rules, but I 14 think -- I know there's a better way to do these 15 consultations. I think you have to be transparent 16 with us, and I don't know why you're delaying the 17 Green book for us to look at the funding line items. 18 It's way overdue. I know you have it, but you just 19 don't want to release it, it seems like. 20 And I think with these consultations, if 21 we can sit down and look at our strategic plans, 22 we'll look at your plans and see where they align. 23 And we offer many programs that will benefit not 24 only Indian communities but our regional areas, 25 United States in general, or globally. And that I</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 85</p> <p>1 sovereignty through self-governed education systems, 2 any restructuring of Indian affairs must include 3 meaningful consultations with tribal governments in 4 prioritizing the long-term sustainability of both 5 tribally controlled schools and colleges and 6 universities, otherwise known as TCUs. These 7 institutions are not simply educational entities. 8 They are extensions of our tribal nations and the 9 foundations of our future. 10 Tribal higher education is rooted in the 11 federal trust and treaty responsibility. TCUs are 12 chartered by tribal governments and serve as direct 13 expressions of tribal sovereignty. We are essential 14 to the economic and educational wellbeing of our 15 rural communities, supporting higher education, 16 workforce development, agriculture, language 17 revitalization, and cultural knowledge. 18 Yet TCUs remain chronically underfunded. 19 Most state colleges provide little or no operational 20 support and we rely heavily on federal funding. 21 When that funding is delayed or inadequate, it puts 22 our institution and the future of our students at 23 risk. From early childhood through post-secondary 24 education, tribal education deserves a federal 25 partner that is responsive, reliable, and fully</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p> <p>1 resourced. Our students cannot afford more 2 instability, staffing, shortages, or delays in 3 funding that disrupt their educational journey. 4 The 1978 TCU Act mandated study of 5 facility needs for TCUs. That study has never been 6 completed, and without it, we lack the national data 7 needed to secure the investments our campuses 8 desperately require. Completing the study is not 9 optional. It is overdue, and it must be funded 10 without cutting into existing TCU programs. 11 In addition, the BIE has not requested an 12 increase in the TCU Facilities Improvement and 13 Repairs program. Today, constructing new facilities 14 in our community costs roughly \$400 per square foot. 15 Without updated data and funding mechanisms, we 16 cannot plan, build, or repair in a way that supports 17 our mission of our students to expand on our courses 18 and program offerings. 19 The Tribally Controlled Colleges and 20 University's Assistance Act of 1978 must be fully 21 supported, not just in word but in action. That 22 includes consistent, adequate funding, timely 23 delivery of resources, technical assistance, and 24 removing bureaucratic barriers that limit our 25 ability to grow. Educational sovereignty is</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p> <p>1 commitment to working with the tribal nations. 2 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Anna. 3 Do we have any other attendees who would 4 like to provide comment? If so, please raise your 5 hand and we'll unmute you. 6 And if there is no one at this time, we're 7 going to go ahead and turn off our cameras and 8 audio, and we'll stay on the line. You're welcome 9 at any time to raise your hand if you would like to 10 provide comment. 11 Hello, we have -- and forgive my 12 pronunciation, Ahniwake Rose. 13 We'll go ahead and unmute you, and you're 14 welcome to turn on your camera if you wish. Go 15 ahead. 16 MS. ROSE: Thank you. It was pretty 17 close. It's Ahniwake, fairly close. 18 Good afternoon. Thank you and thank you 19 for hosting this consultation. I'm Ahniwake Rose. 20 I'm the president and CEO of the American Indian 21 Higher Education Consortium. I just want to add a 22 couple of additional comments. 23 First, I want to really thank our tribal 24 college presidents for being on the call today. 25 They have had some amazing comments, so I just</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p> <p>1 important is impossible without full funding, 2 delayed payments, underfunded mandates, and/or 3 outdated systems actively undermine tribal self- 4 determination. 5 Let me be clear like Dr. or President King 6 stated, TCU should not be lumped into diversity, 7 equity, and inclusion frameworks. Our existence and 8 funding are not discretionary. They're obligations 9 stemming from treaties and federal government trust 10 responsibilities. They are nation to nation 11 commitments that must not be mischaracterized. Our 12 students matter. They deserve dependable funding 13 and modern facilities just like students at our 14 state-run institutions. 15 TCUs operate with a fraction of the 16 resources, yet we are educating and uplifting some 17 of the most underserved communities in the country. 18 Supporting self-governance and education is not just 19 a concept. It's the moral and legal obligation. It 20 means trusting tribal nations to lead and giving 21 them the tools to succeed. TCUs have proven to be 22 impactful. Now it's time for federal structures to 23 rise to the occasion and support the self-determined 24 educational paths for building for our people. 25 Thank you for your time and your</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 89</p> <p>1 really want to amplify and raise their voice. 2 I also want to explicitly thank our tribal 3 leaders who joined the call and talked about our 4 tribal schools and our tribal colleges, specifically 5 Chairman Rupnick for his great comments on Haskell. 6 So I want to just support everything that has 7 already been said from those that have gone before. 8 AHEC will be providing formal comments 9 later in our written testimony as well as we'll be 10 providing oral comments in the DC consultation in 11 the following week. 12 But I wanted to add a few things to the 13 conversation today that both reinforce and I think 14 add some additional context. First, meaningful 15 consultation requires dedicated forums, any reforms 16 to Indian education, including funding changes, 17 restructuring or workforce policy shifts must be 18 developed through government-to-government 19 consultation without a predetermined conclusion. 20 These consultations must be announced well in 21 advance with accessible documentation, be attended 22 by leadership with decision-making authority, center 23 the voices of tribal educators, families, and 24 students, and be followed by public reporting and 25 opportunities for continued engagement.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p> <p>1 Consultations must honor the previous work 2 and build upon the recent reorganization. Prior 3 consultations have led to departmental restructuring 4 that positioned BIE on its own. This move presented 5 a critical opportunity to strengthen BIE's 6 operational independence, staffing, and direct 7 engagement authority, including the creation of a 8 post-secondary office specifically for our tribal 9 colleges, which we are very concerned about at the 10 moment. 11 The federal government must now ensure 12 that BIE is not only administratively separate but 13 adequately enabled with the resources, autonomy, and 14 institutional support necessary to succeed. 15 Consultation must offer transparency and 16 accountability on BIE school choice. Interior just 17 recently announced a new round of tribal 18 consultations regarding the BIE school choice under 19 executive order 14191. However, you have not 20 released the proposal submitted to the White House. 21 This lack of transparency prevents tribal nations 22 from engaging meaningfully in decisions that will 23 shape the future of native education. 24 Further, if tribal nations do not consent 25 to the implementation of this proposal, it's</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p> <p>1 are often overburdensome, and I don't believe this 2 is explicit for TCUs. I believe we also see this in 3 our BIE funded and tribally operated schools, as 4 most reporting documents are not listed with the 5 regulations or BIE requests more details than what 6 is listed within the regulations or within the 7 legislation. 8 There is a need for operational needs 9 study. Tribal colleges and universities are the 10 most underfunded institutions of higher education in 11 the United States. And let me be very explicitly 12 clear, Interior most completely has a trust and 13 treaty responsibility to provide post-secondary 14 education to native students. TCUs must apply to 15 various competitive grants across different agencies 16 to support operational funding due to the fact that 17 operational funding awarded through the BIE is 18 minimal. The appropriations committee has requested 19 that a study be completed to address and capture 20 operational needs of TCUs for several years, yet BIE 21 is out of compliance and is yet to provide that 22 information. 23 Self-governance frameworks must be 24 translated across federal agencies. The Bureau of 25 Indian Education is only one piece of a larger</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p> <p>1 essential that DOI follows their guidance. 2 Consultation must also include education 3 stakeholders in the DOI strategic planning 4 consultation. This specific BIE consultation is a 5 great first step, and we need to see that continued. 6 The Department of Interior has announced new 7 consultations on its strategic plan, but it has yet 8 to designate a need -- a specific focus on the 9 needs, concerns, and sovereignty of tribal education 10 systems. BIE schools, tribal colleges and 11 universities, tribal education departments, and 12 native families must be explicitly included. 13 We're also very concerned about the delay 14 in operational funding for tribal and universities. 15 TCU operational funding is forward funded. However, 16 our TCU often wait months to receive their funding. 17 The delay of these critical resources can interrupt 18 TCU's operations and impede TCU's needs and efforts 19 to provide the department with accurate accounting 20 and timely reporting. 21 A more streamlined process for 22 transferring funds to TCUs would be greatly 23 beneficial. Delays range from a combination of 24 issues that occur during the budget process or 25 within the agency. Reporting requirements for TCUs</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p> <p>1 education ecosystem. As more tribes seek to 2 integrate programs across departments such as HHS, 3 USDA, and ED, Interior should lead efforts in 4 developing inter-agency guidance and training on how 5 638 and 477 models apply to education. This 6 includes helping other agencies understand their 7 legal obligations, compacting eligibility, and 8 tribal sovereignty. This is a real place where 9 Interior can show leadership, and we hope that you 10 do so. 11 Administrative improvements and amendments 12 to the TCU endowment program would strengthen our 13 tribal colleges. The TCU Act includes an endowment 14 for tribal colleges from the BIE de-linking the 15 Tribal College Act endowment funds from operating 16 funds and allowing construction and renovation as 17 allowable uses would ensure adequate flexibility for 18 tribes and TCUs. Also, updating the formula for 19 endowment distribution that is not based on TCU 20 financial status, while also examining opportunities 21 to develop a stable system within the BIE endowment 22 funding would ensure financial certainty for 23 recipients. 24 This is not a legislative fix. This could 25 easily be done within the agency. AHEC is very --</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 94</p> <p>1 it stands ready to work with Interior as you move 2 forward with these consultations and in the forward 3 work. 4 Thank you for allowing us to provide 5 comments. 6 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Ahniwake. 7 If there are any other attendees who would 8 like to provide comment, please raise your hand. 9 And we are going to move into a break. So 10 we'll turn off the video and audio, and we will be 11 back here at 11:35 Mountain Time. Thank you. 12 I'll give a few moments for folks to raise 13 their hand, and if we do not have anyone in the next 14 few moments, we will close the session. 15 MR. CLARK: Rebecca, could you just go 16 back two slides, please? 17 MS. BEAUREGARD: Uh-huh. 18 Okay. If there are no further comments, 19 we will move to close this session. And as a 20 reminder, you can see on the screen that written 21 comments will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. Eastern 22 Time on July 7th. So you may provide comment that 23 way. And there is also additional consultation 24 sessions for tribal leaders as posted on the website 25 with the Dear Tribal Leader letter.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 96</p> <p>1 today, to advocate for urgent in investments and 2 attention to issues impacting the quality of 3 education for our tribal children who are receiving 4 services from the Bureau of Indian Education and 5 also across the nation. 6 So for record, my name is Jordan Etcitty, 7 and I am the executive director for the Dine Bi Olta 8 School Board Association, DBOSBA for short, D-B-O-S- 9 B-A. The Navajo Nation had established DBOSBA to 10 represent locally elected school boards within the 11 Navajo Nation. Our school boards are from the 66 12 Bureau funded schools located across Arizona, New 13 Mexico, and Utah. So our BIE Navajo schools 14 constitute more than one third of the BIE schools 15 nationwide. So we will also provide a written 16 comment. 17 Again, first, I'd like to reiterate 18 several of the comments that have been made that. 19 You know, it's one of the things that has been 20 happening with the consultations we have been 21 listening on. But one of the main ones is just 22 reiterating the trust and treaty obligations that 23 the federal government, the United States must 24 uphold to provide, in this case, quality education 25 for Indian children through our states, our tribes,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 95</p> <p>1 And with that, thank you everyone for 2 attending, and we will -- oh, did we get one in just 3 before? 4 Jordan, do you have a comment to share? 5 We can go ahead and unmute you, and you're welcome 6 to turn on your video. 7 MR. ETCITY: Good morning. Can you hear 8 me? 9 MS. BEAUREGARD: We can hear you. 10 MR. ETCITY: Yes. I'm going to switch to 11 my phone. My internet is not so well, so give me 12 about a few minutes and I'll be on my phone. 13 MS. BEAUREGARD: Sounds good. 14 Any other attendees who wish to give 15 comment 16 Folks in the room, How are you? 17 MR. DEARMAN: Good. 18 MS. BEAUREGARD: Okay. 19 MR. ETCITY: Can you hear me? 20 MS. BEAUREGARD: Yes, Jordan, we can hear 21 you. 22 MR. ETCITY: Okay. Good morning. It's 23 11:39 here in New Mexico on the Navajo Nation. 24 So first, I do want to appreciate the 25 opportunity to participate in providing a comment</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 97</p> <p>1 our nations. 2 Also, the U.S. must ensure that the BIE 3 must implement its statutory authorities such as 4 public law 95561 Tribally controlled Schools Act, 5 and the Indian Education Amendments of 1978. So as 6 far as BIE Navajo, there are -- we do have both 7 bureau-operated schools and tribally-controlled 8 schools. 9 But to begin, I would like to first 10 request the Secretary of Interior, Honorable 11 Secretary Bergen to consider the prompt recession of 12 secretarial order 3334, which initiated the 13 reorganization of BIE, known as BIE strategic 14 direction. This order has failed to meet its goal 15 and return -- and it has returned to the federal 16 paternalism and dominance of Indian education, much 17 like the boarding school era to the government. 18 The Interior has failed education reforms 19 of academic achievements, gaps, the inadequate 20 funding to supply necessary materials and equipment 21 to its schools. For example, our education resource 22 centers in the Navajo region has not benefited. Our 23 tribally controlled schools in the Navajo regions 24 have not benefited from this order reorganization. 25 Oftentimes, the bureau operated schools provide --</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 98</p> <p>1 are receiving more technical assistance than our 2 tribally controlled schools.</p> <p>3 The whole intention was to provide 4 adequate service, immediate service to our schools 5 on Navajo. Our tribally controlled schools are left 6 without the resources of the bureau operated 7 schools. So they do not have time to flourish like 8 the bureau operated schools. One example is the IT 9 portion of Navajo Nation, the BOS schools of Navajo 10 Nation. Most of the bureau operated had benefited 11 from IT, whereas the tribally controlled schools did 12 not.</p> <p>13 So it's more -- we feel that it's more 14 within the government and I think they got immediate 15 service, that's why. So we are requesting to 16 reestablish also the agencies across Navajo nation 17 where education line officers were there to assist 18 our schools directly and had more direct oversight 19 over our schools, especially in kind like funding, 20 funding issues, facilities and whatnot.</p> <p>21 So as far as -- going into the Dear Tribal 22 Leader letter, there are several recommendations 23 that we do have. Specifically for the tribally 24 controlled schools, I do want to reiterate, BIE does 25 impose excessive reporting demands on tribally</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 100</p> <p>1 request on policy administration and funding. 2 Centralizing the BIE offices, often there's, as I 3 mentioned, unnecessary reports interfering with our 4 efforts to improve student performance, greater 5 transparency and funding allocations and responsive 6 responsiveness to schools' needs is critical for 7 accountability and better outcomes.</p> <p>8 On Maximo and facilities management, 9 Maximo software is outdated, as mentioned earlier, 10 for many of our schools and school administrators 11 across the nation. It's difficult to navigate and 12 contain inaccurate data, requiring excessive staff 13 training. There's long and unclear time for 14 maintenance requests, increased costs, and 15 compromise safe learning, which compromises safe 16 learning environments.</p> <p>17 For example, as Pinon Community School had 18 mentioned it has lacked reliable heating and cooling 19 for years impacting student safety and dormitories. 20 These delays balloon budgets and disrupts education. 21 So we are recommending updating Maximo, establishing 22 clear timelines for maintenance, and improving 23 communication on repair processes.</p> <p>24 On local control -- on local control, our 25 schools know their students and communities best,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 99</p> <p>1 controlled schools across Navajo Nation. And we do 2 not know if it is just specifically Navajo Nation. 3 This kind of diverts the focus of education -- 4 educating our native children, but the expansion of 5 the top level administration within BIE. These BIE 6 personnels have requested reports from our schools, 7 and at most times, it's from staff from different 8 regions. And most times, it's the same reports that 9 are being requested.</p> <p>10 There was a mention that we are in, I 11 think it was a paper age. We need to move forward 12 into a digital age, and we strongly agree with that. 13 I believe it came from Navajo Prep. So these 14 additional administrative layers undermine the 15 Tribally Controlled Schools Act, which complicates 16 collaboration, especially in rural areas across 17 Navajo Nation. We're not fortunate as most 18 communities -- as most schools who are near large 19 cities or a system where they are able to benefit 20 from the local city. So this complicates -- or 21 further, we urge the BIE to streamline internal 22 information sharing to eliminate redundant reporting 23 requirements for schools.</p> <p>24 So next, the BIE must enhance transparency 25 in its operation and respond more quickly to our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 101</p> <p>1 making them uniquely equipped to develop culturally 2 relevant curriculum and respond to emergencies. So 3 our local school boards understand daily operations 4 and can deliver education in a culturally 5 appropriate way. The BIE should empower our schools 6 to manage their own affairs to enhance education 7 delivery.</p> <p>8 Next, regarding funding structures and 9 efficiency barriers, the current reporting process 10 is inefficient by multiple non-standardized reports 11 to various BIE offices. This reduces accountability 12 and diverts resources from our educational mission 13 within our respective schools. Congress mandates a 14 single comprehensive grant report for all federal 15 funding, which to be BIE implements to reduce 16 administrative burdens. That bureaucracy undermines 17 the intent of the Tribally Controlled Schools Act, 18 hindering our focus on student needs.</p> <p>19 The BIE must reorientate its services to 20 be responsive to local schools' needs and 21 accountable for locally identified performance 22 objectives.</p> <p>23 Regarding the tribal self-governance and 24 self-determination, the BIE should empower local 25 school leaders to develop curricula that resonate</p>

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1 within our community's cultural needs, integrating
2 cultural elements into education, improved academic
3 performance, fosters community engagements, and
4 preserve tribal heritage. This approach encounters
5 historical, harmful federal policies and keeps
6 native children engaged in their learning with
7 native education outcomes among the lowest in the
8 U.S.

9 Culturally relevant education is critical.
10 Federal law mandates meeting the unique educational
11 and cultural needs of native children. We are
12 committed to working with the BIE to achieve this.
13 The BIE should prioritize cultural integration and
14 support our school's ability to address local needs.

15 So in conclusion, one the things we also
16 want to bring up off topic is that our opposition in
17 the 187 million cut to the Bureau of Indian
18 Education construction account in fiscal year 2026,
19 president's discretionary budget request. This
20 would slash funds by nearly 70 percent.

21 So this reduction would worsen the BIE's
22 ongoing failure to address deplorable state of its
23 schools, particularly in the Navajo nation where
24 nearly half operated -- half of the schools are
25 outdated or unsafe.

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1 School leadership diligently provide
2 unnecessary or its necessary documentation, yet
3 BIE's failure to process these submissions promptly
4 allows minor issues to escalate into severe
5 problems, significantly increasing repair costs.
6 Mismanagement exacerbates the system -- systemic
7 issue of deteriorating infrastructure with 77
8 percent of schools listed in poor condition in
9 fiscal year 2020. So they're still awaiting
10 critical repairs or replacement.

11 The shortcomings undermine the quality
12 education mandated by the federal trust
13 responsibility rooted into the Constitution case law
14 and federal statute. The proposed cuts would
15 further jeopardize safe and healthy learning
16 environments for our native students limiting their
17 preparation for the 21st century workforce. We're
18 urging the Department of Interior to reject this
19 proposal and hold the BIE accountable for efficient
20 fund management and timely processing to repair,
21 replace, and maintain facilities, ensuring a safe
22 and culturally supportive schools for our native
23 children.

24 So in conclusion, I do want to thank you
25 for the opportunity to provide my comments today.

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1 We are committed to collaborating with our federal
2 partners to meet the cultural and educational needs
3 of our students. Again, we're listening on to
4 several of the consultation, and we are supporting
5 our other neighboring tribes or other neighboring
6 nations as well. Thank you.

7 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Jordan.
8 If we have any other commenters -- we do.
9 Kevin Johnson, we will take you off mute, and you
10 are welcome to turn on your camera if you wish.

11 Kevin, are you with us?
12 If you are talking, we cannot hear you.

13 MR. VINT: Kevin, we see that you're
14 unmuted. It may just be that you have the wrong
15 microphone selected. You'll need to click the up
16 arrow next to the microphone icon and potentially
17 select a different microphone under the select a
18 microphone dropdown.

19 MS. BEAUREGARD: And while we're waiting
20 for Kevin, if there are any others online who would
21 like to provide comment, please do indicate so by
22 clicking the "Raise hand" button at the bottom of
23 your Zoom screen, and that will get you in the
24 queue.

25 MR. VINT: We're certain to see Kevin. If

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1 you're still struggling with a microphone, you can
2 chat us and we can give you the phone number to call
3 in so we can at least hear you as you give your
4 comment.

5 MR. JOHNSON: Hello?
6 MR. VINT: Now, we hear you.
7 MR. JOHNSON: Oh, okay.
8 MS. BEAUREGARD: Perfect.

9 MR. JOHNSON: Hello, my name is Kevin
10 Johnson. I'm with the Eastern Navajo Agency, and
11 I'm community school dormitory. We're a 10297 grant
12 school, and I just want to thank Mr. Tony Dearman
13 and the people there in the office to listen to all
14 our comments. It does take a lot of courage to be
15 at these consultations because it's obvious -- easy
16 to point out all the things that need improvement,
17 but we just appreciate you guys supporting us at
18 Washington and having monies come down to us. We
19 receive our title funds. We're thankful that we
20 receive the monies.

21 And what I learned working here in the
22 business office is that we have to be business
23 people as well. Educators is a good thing, but we
24 have to have business skills as well because budgets
25 vary from titles, transportation, facilities, and we

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 106</p> <p>1 have leaders that we work under and some of the 2 decisions and choices they make, they make, but we 3 as business people, we have to use our skills and 4 apply it to what we get. 5 And I just reviewed the green book that 6 was posted on the BIE website, and I saw the 7 proposed figures. You know, we just pray for you 8 guys that you guys will make good choices for our 9 schools, and we know the treaty is there. And you 10 guys always will use that and apply it for Indian 11 education and just thankful that we are able to get 12 millions of dollars every year to support our 13 students, to support the curriculum, the web-based, 14 all the technology and stuff that we get for them. 15 And then also, paying our teachers and 16 giving our employees a place to work and giving them 17 the ability to have retentions, giving them the 18 ability to have access to health coverage, 19 retirement. Those are things that we do to provide 20 to our students -- I mean to our staff. And if you 21 guys weren't there, we wouldn't be able to have 22 those monies coming down to the rural areas of the 23 Navajo Nation. 24 So I know we'll always ask for more money, 25 but I am thankful for the money that we get from you</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 108</p> <p>1 Community School Board President provided testimony 2 at SIPI on Tuesday, May 27th. Please ensure 3 comments made on that day are included under the 4 Bureau of Indian Education consultation comments. 5 I would like to add a few additional 6 comments in regards to our school here at TóHajiilee 7 and also schools across the Bureau of Indian 8 Education. 9 We are a tribally controlled school and 10 have the autonomy of local control. We had 11 successful audits, and with the burdensome 12 duplication of reporting requirements that are 13 imposed on our schools, it makes it difficult to be 14 efficient in our role as school administrators. As 15 administrator of a tribally controlled school here 16 at TóHajiilee Community School, we don't have the 17 privilege such as public schools where they have 18 superintendents, assistant superintendents, 19 managers, coordinators to help with the overburden 20 of reporting requirements. 21 The public school administrators focus on 22 teachers and students because they have the support 23 system of superintendents and their staff to support 24 the administrator. At the Tribal Summit in Rapid 25 City, South Dakota, last summer, I addressed this</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 107</p> <p>1 guys because it keeps our organization going. It 2 keeps our family engagement going. It keeps our 3 teachers, the availability to attend professional 4 developments and to celebrate success. With these 5 monies, we're able to do that, and we're able to 6 retain and we have to adapt to the challenges we 7 have because we're on the border town, so we have 8 public schools next door and that we have a little 9 bit more freedom as far as a grant school to be 10 competitive and rearrange our resources to be 11 compatible and keep those highly professional 12 employees at our school. 13 So thank you, and that's all I wanted to 14 say. 15 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Kevin. 16 Do we have any online attendees who would 17 like to provide comment? 18 I'll wait just a few moments. Oh, 19 wonderful. We have Willinda Castillo. You're back, 20 and we will unmute you. You're welcome to turn on 21 your camera if you wish. Please go ahead. 22 MS. CASTILLO: Good afternoon. My name is 23 Willinda Castillo. I'm the Chief School 24 Administrator at TóHajiilee Community School. I 25 would like to add to record that TóHajiilee</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 109</p> <p>1 concern. We have various emails from various 2 departments from the BIE requesting for meetings for 3 us to attend, documents to submit from the Bureau of 4 Indian Education Program Management. It is sent to 5 the school administrators from various entities such 6 as facilities, environmental, DPA, and other offices 7 within BIE. 8 Keep in mind we have our own internal 9 school communication with our teachers, our 10 students, our parents, school board, local partners, 11 outside partners, and the tribal education 12 department. This burdensome of additional requests 13 of meetings and documents has led to work and beyond 14 our duty hours. 15 Furthermore, when GAO reports are 16 released, the trust responsibilities have not been 17 addressed in regards to funding to be allocated to 18 local schools. But instead, more positions are 19 created in the BIE's education program management, 20 which leads to more burdensome reports on local 21 schools, and this is evident in the BIE's green 22 book. 23 Next, the management of funds need to be 24 addressed for BIE schools. Number one, on February 25 3, 2025, President Trump signed a proclamation</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 110</p> <p>1 naming February 2025 as Career and Technical 2 Education Month. Federal funding for Career 3 Technical Education, CTE, should be funded for our 4 Native American students enrolled in the Bureau of 5 Indian Education. In the state of New Mexico, the 6 Tribally Controlled BIE schools, which includes 7 administrators and local school boards from 8 respective schools, were able to advocate to receive 9 funding for CTE programs, but we have to compete 10 with public schools.</p> <p>11 This should not be the case. BIE should 12 be requesting career technical education funding to 13 enhance programs we offer at our local BIE schools. 14 Perkins funds are allocated by Congress to the state 15 education departments such as New Mexico PED. If 16 Congress is able to fund CTE Perkins, BIE should 17 also receive funding without competing with our 18 local public schools and our states.</p> <p>19 Number two, New Mexico Public Education 20 Department allocates textbook funding for their 21 public-school students, but for the Bureau of Indian 22 Education, we don't receive any additional funding 23 and have to use our \$7,790.55 ISDEAA funding to 24 purchase curriculum supplemental materials to 25 support the textbook adoption for our students.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 112</p> <p>1 teachers, our staff in today's world. This also 2 includes providing school nurses for our Native 3 American students.</p> <p>4 Number seven, to streamline our 5 communication with the Bureau of Indian Education, 6 the five agencies must be reestablished for Navajo 7 schools. As a school administrator, I'm receiving 8 emails from various entity and I'm inquiring, may I 9 ask where you're from? May I ask what state you're 10 from? That should not be the case. I should be 11 able to communicate with somebody from our own 12 agency such as TóHajiilee in the Eastern Agency from 13 Navajo Nation. I should have a contact person in 14 Crown Point, New Mexico, to where I can reach out 15 for assistance. That needs to be streamlined 16 instead of me contacting somebody in Phoenix, and 17 then another time it's in another state. And we 18 wonder why our education system is failing within 19 the Bureau of Indian Education.</p> <p>20 Next, our grant condition states that if 21 there are any EPA issues at our school, we are to 22 deal directly with the EPA. However, for reasons 23 that are not even fathomable to us, the BIE has 24 established an EPA bureaucracy who is as of this 25 week contacting us for evaluation visit. Our school</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 111</p> <p>1 Number three, BIE also received about 30 2 million in IT, which tribally controlled schools do 3 not receive any of these funds to support our 4 learning management system, our bandwidth technology 5 in classroom as some of the other schools have 6 mentioned in this consultation meeting today.</p> <p>7 Number four, please consider for funding 8 our maintenance and operation.</p> <p>9 Number five, TóHajiilee Community School 10 has provided 25 CFR teacher parity at a consultation 11 that took place in Arizona, but as of today, schools 12 have not received updates about that consultation 13 that took place. When executive order such as today 14 14210 is complete, will there be feedback provided 15 back to us?</p> <p>16 Number six, consultation to address safety 17 and school nurse is in dire need. Currently, there 18 are no school resource officers in any of the BIE 19 schools that we are aware of, especially on the 20 Navajo Nation. The police call for our school at 21 TóHajiilee can arrange from three hours or even 22 until the next day or even beyond one day, two days, 23 three days even more.</p> <p>24 The trust responsibility of educating 25 student must include the safety of our students, our</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 113</p> <p>1 buildings are still the property of BIA who has an 2 EPA function, and the majority of their EPA function 3 have been contracted to the Navajo nation.</p> <p>4 The Navajo Nation EPA office has visited 5 our school in regards to the BIA or BIE solid waste 6 operations at our school. This BIE function does 7 nothing to assist us in setting aside time to 8 address student achievement, much less to assist us 9 in responding to the huge bureaucracy in the BIE 10 that in fact also curtails our efforts to address 11 number one student performance.</p> <p>12 The BIE is establishing all these offices. 13 Now I have to deal with the EPA. I have to deal 14 with the new transportation web ET 2.0 of 15 information that we have to enter. There's so much 16 that we can handle as school administrators, but yet 17 we don't get that support. It's more documents 18 that's being placed on us.</p> <p>19 The new EPA office to us is still another 20 unfunded mandate from BIE and like the rest of the 21 BIE bloated bureaucracy that furnishes us nothing in 22 regards to funding administrative resources to help 23 us deal with school operations and student 24 performance. The BIE schools have to fund their 25 administrative function that fund the day-to-day</p>

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1 operation for academics, food service,
2 transportation facility out of our ISDEAA dollars.
3 As I mentioned earlier, \$7,790.55.

4 There is no way to student unit for
5 administration. There's so much things that are
6 happening within the Bureau of Indian Education.
7 More consultation like this needs to take place, get
8 the school administrators together, and we can help
9 to problem solve some of these issues that are
10 happening within the Bureau of Indian Education.
11 Yes, we're tribally controlled schools, but there's
12 so many things that are happening from the top down
13 and it's trickling down to our local level.

14 I appreciate this consultation, and I hope
15 to see more consultation to take place, and as I
16 mentioned the 25 CFR that we have provided a
17 document to the Bureau of Indian Education in
18 regards to teacher parity, we have not heard
19 anything. So I hope that this consultation, we are
20 given some type of feedback, and I appreciate you
21 listening to me. Thank you.

22 MS. BEAUREGARD: Thank you, Willinda.

23 Are there any other attendees who would
24 like to provide comment?

25 Okay. With no further commenters, we will

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1 the comments received from our tribal leaders as
2 well as our stakeholders, our staff, faculty, and
3 our administrators within our system.

4 But with that, I really appreciate each
5 and every one of you for joining and look forward to
6 the future conversations and our consultations that
7 we have scheduled to finish this process out. Thank
8 you very much.

9 (WHEREUPON, the transcript of WORKFORCE
10 EFFICIENCY/PRODUCTIVITY AND EMERGENCY PERMITTING
11 CONSULTATIONS was concluded at 1:13 p.m.)

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1 move to close the session. I really appreciate
2 everyone taking your time today being with us.
3 Thank you.

4 MR. CLARK: Rebecca, one moment.

5 MS. DEARMAN: Thank you, Rebecca.

6 Appreciate all the help today we received from
7 Rebecca facilitating the consultation.

8 I want to thank everyone that came online
9 to make the comments, and I can assure you that the
10 Bureau of Indian Education takes your comments very
11 seriously.

12 As far as feedback, you know, once all the
13 consultations are finished and the written period is
14 concluded and all the comments are gathered, we'll
15 work with the department to see what the next step
16 is based off of the consultations, and then we'll
17 provide the updates based on that.

18 Again, I really want to thank each and
19 every one of you for participating today. For those
20 of you at our schools in the trenches, face to face
21 with our kids, thank you so much. Really appreciate
22 your dedication, your hard work every day and the
23 love that you provide our students. Our BIE staff
24 appreciate you listening in. I think it's very
25 important that we hear firsthand the concerns and

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CERTIFICATE

3 I, Errin Kent, do hereby certify that I
4 reported all proceedings adduced in the foregoing
5 matter and that the foregoing transcript pages
6 constitutes a full, true and accurate record of said
7 proceedings to the best of my ability.

9 I further certify that I am neither related to
10 counsel or any party to the proceedings nor have any
11 interest in the outcome of the proceedings.

13 IN WITNESS HEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand
14 this 6th day of June, 2025.

En M/AA

Errin Kent, #2704

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