

Session 1: Executive Order to Expand Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families on March 14, 2025

WEBVTT

1

00:00:04.120 --> 00:00:30.489

Oliver Whaley, RACA: As this is a formal tribal consultation, our focus today will be on receiving comments from both designated tribal representatives and all BIE stakeholders. Generally, when we conduct these tribal consultations, we do focus on comments from designated tribal representatives, however, because the implications of this executive order, 14191, impact all BIE stakeholders directly we want to hear from everyone that might be impacted.

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00:00:30.620 --> 00:00:36.299

Oliver Whaley, RACA: But if you are a designated tribal representative, please let us know when you are called upon to provide your comment.

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00:00:36.540 --> 00:00:42.689

Oliver Whaley, RACA: And additionally, because there is such a large number of participants on this call, we won't be able to answer

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00:00:42.860 --> 00:01:01.409

Oliver Whaley, RACA: all of today's questions during the session. And instead, we'd like to focus on just receiving your specific comments. Additionally, we're going to seek to limit comments to 3 min apiece to ensure that we allow the most amount of time possible for people to provide their comments, and we will provide a timer. So you know, when your time is up

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00:01:02.250 --> 00:01:19.530

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Next, I'm just going to go over some initial logistics. However, we'll provide these instructions again, so don't worry if you don't capture all the information. When we do get through our initial presentation we'll welcome your comments at that time. If you would like to make a verbal comment. You can do so by raising your virtual hand.

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00:01:19.600 --> 00:01:46.540

Oliver Whaley, RACA: To do this, you can go down to the bottom of your screen, click the reactions, button and select, raise hand, and we'll call on individuals to speak, and then you can unmute yourself at that time, and if you're unable to raise your virtual hand, you can type your comment in the chat box, and then, when you're called upon to provide a verbal comment, if you could provide your name, title, and tribal affiliation that would also be appreciated. And that just helps us kind of track comments. And for anyone that might be joining by the toll-free number.

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00:01:46.540 --> 00:01:49.523

Audrey Plouffe: No need for the zoom.

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00:01:50.990 --> 00:01:54.898

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Sorry I'm gonna mute that individual.

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00:01:56.000 --> 00:02:05.660

Oliver Whaley, RACA: If for any of you that might be joining by the toll-free number, you can use *9 to raise your virtual hand and *6 to mute and unmute yourself. And I do see we have a few of those.

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00:02:05.850 --> 00:02:18.889

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Additionally, if you're in need of closed captioning services. You can access that by going to the bottom of your screen, clicking the up arrow next to the closed caption button, and choosing show subtitle. We're also going to put a link in the chat.

11

00:02:19.300 --> 00:02:40.680

Oliver Whaley, RACA: And then we also have links to the Dear Tribal Leader Letter, a copy of the presentation today and a link to the executive order that can be found on the BIA website. And we'll also provide a link to the website in the chat. Additionally, we are planning to provide copies of the consultation transcripts, and possibly the video. Sometime after the close of the session.

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00:02:41.178 --> 00:02:49.810

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Just depends on how long it takes to generate those and make it accessible. But when we do, that, information will also be made available via the website.

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00:02:50.680 --> 00:02:57.469

Oliver Whaley, RACA: I will now turn the time over to our BIE Director Tony Dearman. Again, thanks for joining us today.

14

00:03:02.010 --> 00:03:03.090

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: Thank you, Oliver.

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00:03:03.550 --> 00:03:10.529

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: Hello. Tribal leaders, school board members, tribal education departments, educators, parents and stakeholders.

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00:03:10.800 --> 00:03:18.929

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: Thank you for joining today's consultation on the recent executive order on expanding educational freedom and opportunities for families.

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00:03:19.720 --> 00:03:23.410

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: The President signed the executive order on January 29.

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00:03:23.850 --> 00:03:28.880

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: With the goal on expanding educational options for parents and families.

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00:03:29.420 --> 00:03:37.070

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: Tribes already successfully use existing legal flexibilities to operate locally led BIE funded schools.

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00:03:37.460 --> 00:03:38.470

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: However,

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00:03:38.580 --> 00:03:52.810

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: we welcome your input regarding expanding on existing options that could put BIE funds directly with parents and families of BIE eligible students to use for their own educational priorities.

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00:03:53.250 --> 00:04:02.799

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: Your presence underscores our continued partnership, and shared commitment to the educational success and well-being of our students.

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00:04:03.320 --> 00:04:07.079

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Vicente and Margo for the presentation.

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00:04:07.230 --> 00:04:08.759

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: And thank you for joining us.

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00:04:15.870 --> 00:04:17.850

Katharine Ford: Ms. Delange, you're on mute.

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00:04:18.260 --> 00:04:19.720

Katharine Ford: Your microphone is on mute.

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00:04:19.720 --> 00:04:42.670

Margo DeLaune: Thank you for reminding me. My name is Margo Delon. I'm the Associate Deputy Director for the Division of Performance and

Accountability, and I'd like to welcome everyone here who has come to listen to our session. I will be one of the presenters today, and I'm going to turn the mic over to the second presenter today.

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00:04:44.160 --> 00:04:54.009

Carmelia Becenti: Good morning, everyone. My name is Carmelia Becenti, and I am the chief academic officer in the Bureau of Indian Education. I will also be presenting alongside Ms. Delaune this morning.

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00:04:54.120 --> 00:04:55.620

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you for joining us.

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00:04:58.110 --> 00:04:59.040

Margo DeLaune: Next slide.

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00:05:01.550 --> 00:05:23.090

Margo DeLaune: So before we begin today, I'd just like to remind everyone to please mute your phones or your microphones to cut back on any feedback or outside noise. When you enter the session, please enter your name in the chat box along with your title, tribal affiliation, and any other information you would like to share.

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00:05:23.520 --> 00:05:37.280

Margo DeLaune: Once the comment session begins, this is again a reminder to please raise your hand using the zoom reaction box at the bottom of the screen, and you may also type your comments in the chat box.

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00:05:37.460 --> 00:05:43.059

Margo DeLaune: And a second reminder is that this session will be recorded. Next slide.

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00:05:47.510 --> 00:05:55.459

Carmelia Becenti: So in preparation for today's tribal consultation session, like to remind everyone of our mission and vision of the Bureau of Union Education.

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00:05:55.560 --> 00:06:13.110

Carmelia Becenti: Our mission is in partnership with indigenous nations. The Bae promotes a culturally based holistic education that prepares and empowers students to be healthy and successful, and our vision is that excellence in student-centered, indigenous education is 1st and foremost.

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00:06:13.580 --> 00:06:14.530

Carmelia Becenti: Next slide.

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00:06:17.820 --> 00:06:31.039

Margo DeLaune: So as a reminder. The purpose of the consultation today is to provide information to the executive order, to expand educational freedom and opportunities for families.

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00:06:31.040 --> 00:06:49.670

Margo DeLaune: Exploring the different mechanisms that allow families of BIE eligible students to use Federal funding for educational purposes of their choice, and this could include a choice to attend a private school, a faith-based school, or a public charter school.

39

00:06:50.020 --> 00:06:51.140

Margo DeLaune: Next slide.

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00:06:55.420 --> 00:07:07.350

Carmelia Becenti: Again, we appreciate each of you on this tribal consultation call today. The purpose of today's consultation is to seek input, from our tribes and stakeholders. Regarding this executive order.

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00:07:07.470 --> 00:07:27.579

Carmelia Becenti: We have all read that this executive order is to expand educational freedom and opportunity by exploring mechanisms that allow families of BIE eligible students to utilize Federal funding for educational options of their choice, including private, faith-based or public charter schools

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00:07:27.770 --> 00:07:40.710

Carmelia Becenti: In order to break down each component of the executive order for today's consultation. We have taken each of the related topics one by one, there on the screen, and we'll review them with some guiding questions.

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00:07:41.160 --> 00:07:42.100

Carmelia Becenti: Next slide.

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00:07:44.740 --> 00:07:57.799

Margo DeLaune: So what is the main feedback today? What is the main objective today? We would like everyone to consider the following questions on what available mechanisms can provide families of eligible students

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00:07:57.860 --> 00:08:19.360

Margo DeLaune: use of federal funding for educational options of their choice, including how any such mechanisms will be funded. So some

questions to think about as we as we continue with this presentation is, should all BIE schools be included in the BIE school choice plan.

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00:08:19.360 --> 00:08:41.139

Margo DeLaune: And should BIE develop a voucher system with using the elementary Secondary Education Act 103 a monies to help pay for tuition, related fees for a BIE student to attend a private school, parochial school or online academy.

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00:08:42.240 --> 00:08:43.370

Margo DeLaune: Next slide.

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00:08:47.540 --> 00:08:54.090

Carmelia Becenti: The next component of the executive order. We'd appreciate your feedback, as it relates to the extent

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00:08:54.230 --> 00:09:08.439

Carmelia Becenti: that there exist any such mechanisms to implement in the 2025, 26, school year, the eligibility criteria for students in the plan referenced in the executive order should be as follows.

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00:09:08.800 --> 00:09:27.679

Carmelia Becenti: In other words, you can think about this question in terms of which students should be deemed eligible. Under this initiative your feedback from today's consultation will help define which BIE eligible students should receive funding for expanded educational opportunities.

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00:09:27.910 --> 00:09:28.930

Carmelia Becenti: Next slide.

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00:09:33.020 --> 00:09:33.880

Margo DeLaune: So

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00:09:34.080 --> 00:09:59.690

Margo DeLaune: what is the initiative? After funding for existing schools? The intention is to broaden the educational opportunities or options for students that they can potentially provide their students local flexibility to attend non-vie schools. So some of the questions that you might want to consider as we go through this presentation is, how will cultural considerations be addressed

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00:09:59.690 --> 00:10:17.929

Margo DeLaune: in non-BIE educational settings? So how are we going to ensure that the options and respect incorporate our cultural values is

very paramount, and we seek your guidance on how to build and uphold these principles

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00:10:17.930 --> 00:10:31.560

Margo DeLaune: across all educational settings. However, this is a reminder that if a BIE eligible student does not attend a BIE school. The BIE is not in a position to uphold such principles.

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00:10:31.570 --> 00:10:35.899

Margo DeLaune: So how should BIE identify educational options

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00:10:35.920 --> 00:11:02.270

Margo DeLaune: existing that for BIE students to potentially transfer or take or make as their school of choice. Should there be a limitation in the distance between BIE students, home and the school of choice. For example, on elementary students. Should there be a 15 mile, one-way limitation on transportation to that school.

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00:11:02.270 --> 00:11:16.040

Margo DeLaune: Middle and high school students might have a different mileage. Might maybe 25 miles. One way might be a limitation. So we'd like to hear your comments and concerns about this as well. Next slide.

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00:11:22.120 --> 00:11:43.159

Carmelia Becenti: Again stakeholders. We appreciate you being a part of today's tribal consultation session. The purpose of today's session is to seek your input about this particular executive order. Please limit your comments to 3 min to accommodate feedback from other participants, and to stay focused on the executive order and related topics.

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00:11:43.680 --> 00:11:44.560

Carmelia Becenti: Next.

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00:11:51.550 --> 00:12:21.039

Margo DeLaune: So in seeking consultation and inputs from tribes and other stakeholders, we are again putting up this slide to remind you what the 3 questions are on the mechanisms for implementing a expanding school choice option for our students. So think about any available mechanisms that could provide families of eligible students. The use of federal funding for educational options of their choice, including

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00:12:21.040 --> 00:12:23.800

Margo DeLaune: how any such mechanisms will be funded.

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00:12:23.950 --> 00:12:31.859

Margo DeLaune: The second question to consider is to the extent that there exist any mechanisms to implement for school year

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00:12:31.940 --> 00:13:00.929

Margo DeLaune: 2025 to 2026. The eligibility criteria for students in the plan referenced in the executive order. And then the 3rd question, again, is educational options near existing BIE funded schools that provide potentially eligible students, local flexibility to attend a non-BIE school, such as a private school, faith-based school or public charter school. Next slide.

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00:13:05.590 --> 00:13:07.909

Carmelia Becenti: Stakeholders can provide input

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00:13:08.460 --> 00:13:33.210

Carmelia Becenti: if they cannot attend today's consultation session by submitting their written comments via email to consultationcomments@bie.edu or send your comments to Ms. Juanita Mendoza. There on the screen, with the address and all written comments must be submitted by Friday, March 21st 2025, at 1159 pm. pacific time.

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00:13:34.370 --> 00:13:35.290

Carmelia Becenti: Next slide.

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00:13:40.300 --> 00:13:48.820

Margo DeLaune: As a reminder. Please submit comments. By Friday, March 21st 2025, by 11:

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00:13:48.930 --> 00:13:54.390

Margo DeLaune: 59 Pm. pacific time. Next slide.

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00:14:03.720 --> 00:14:05.830

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Okay, that concludes

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00:14:06.130 --> 00:14:13.580

Oliver Whaley, RACA: our initial presentation. So we are going to move to the comment portion. If you can just give me one second here.

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00:14:13.740 --> 00:14:16.530

Oliver Whaley, RACA: I'm going to get the timer

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00:14:17.330 --> 00:14:24.359

Oliver Whaley, RACA: uploaded and then just explain how that's gonna work. And then we will move to the part where we get to hear from you.

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00:14:27.570 --> 00:14:32.090

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Okay? So when I start the timer

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00:14:33.599 --> 00:14:40.199

Oliver Whaley, RACA: one of the logos will appear, the BIE Logo, and it'll go in a kind of a circle, as you can see.

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00:14:40.400 --> 00:14:48.980

Oliver Whaley, RACA: and there's 3 of them. So each one is 1 min, and then, once completed, you'll get a notification like this. It'll pop up, saying, your 3 min are complete.

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00:14:49.630 --> 00:14:56.350

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Okay, let's go ahead and move to the comment portion. So we'll go in the order of raised hands

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00:14:56.860 --> 00:15:07.819

Oliver Whaley, RACA: and the 1st hand raised that I see is Mark Vance. So, Mr. Vance, go ahead and take yourself off mute, and provide your comments. Thank you.

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00:15:08.790 --> 00:15:19.250

Mark Vance: Good morning. Everyone. Thanks for having us today. I am Mark Vance from the Cherokee Nation Education Service Department Executive Director. A few comments I want to make today from the Cherokee Nation is our position and

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00:15:19.420 --> 00:15:28.840

Mark Vance: commitment to tribal sovereignty and education. The Cherokee Nation is committed to protecting sovereignty, preserving culture, and ensuring high quality education for its citizens.

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00:15:29.100 --> 00:15:32.230

Mark Vance: Second concerns about the impact on BIE schools.

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00:15:32.340 --> 00:15:42.629

Mark Vance: The proposed school choice system risks diverting critical funding away from BIE funding and tribal operated schools which already face chronic underfunding,

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00:15:42.950 --> 00:15:54.559

Mark Vance: accountability and oversight issues. Oklahoma State choice program has faced challenges, including improper expenditures and misused funds highlighting the need for strong financial oversight.

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00:15:54.880 --> 00:16:02.690

Mark Vance: Tribal nations exercise school choice. The tribally controlled Schools Act of 1998 affirms the right of tribal nations to operate schools

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00:16:02.850 --> 00:16:06.469

Mark Vance: that reflect their cultures, language and community priorities.

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00:16:06.620 --> 00:16:16.720

Mark Vance: Federal trust responsibilities. The Federal Government has legal and moral obligations to uphold its trust and treaty responsibilities to Indian education.

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00:16:18.790 --> 00:16:31.509

Mark Vance: Meaningful tribal consultations, tribal nations must be fully engaged in the planning and implementation of any choice initiative that affects BIE eligible students.

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00:16:31.870 --> 00:16:41.580

Mark Vance: Our student-centered approach. Any funds modeled must consider the mobility of native students across different school systems and ensure the financial resources following students.

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00:16:41.960 --> 00:16:48.140

Mark Vance: And I will get this other information in by the deadline. Thank you for your time.

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00:16:48.920 --> 00:16:50.979

Margo DeLaune: Thank you, Mr. Vance, for your comments.

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00:16:52.460 --> 00:17:00.210

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Okay, I'm gonna reset the timer here. The next hand that I have raised is Chairman Lowe's.

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00:17:01.890 --> 00:17:03.509

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Hey, guys, can you guys hear me?

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00:17:04.180 --> 00:17:05.069

Margo DeLaune: Yes, we can hear you.

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00:17:05.079 --> 00:17:05.809

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Yes.

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00:17:05.810 --> 00:17:22.859

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: 90. My name is Austin Lowes. I'm the chairman of the Sioux St. Marie tribe of Chippewa Indians, commonly referred to as the Sioux tribe. We have 52,000 enrolled citizens, with roughly 1/3 residing in our tribal service area, 1/3 residing in Michigan, and 1/3 residing outside the State of Michigan.

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00:17:22.859 --> 00:17:37.659

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Our tribal Grant School, the Joseph K. Lumsden Bowteen Public School Academy, which we sometimes refer to as JKL serves 624 students, and this makes up approximately 52% of the K through 8 population in Chippewa County.

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00:17:37.710 --> 00:17:42.469

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: JKL is both a tribally controlled Grant school and a Michigan public Charter School.

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00:17:42.880 --> 00:18:01.650

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Indian education is a Federal trust responsibility, not a discretionary program. As the Federal Government considers reforms, it must ensure that changes honor, treaty obligations that they respect tribal sovereignty, and that they expand, not diminish educational opportunities for native American students.

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00:18:02.190 --> 00:18:19.330

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: The Sioux tribe created JKL to address the low graduation rates in our tribal community, and since that time we have seen a significant improvement in our graduation rates and in the number of students seeking both higher education through universities and colleges as well as in trade schools and vocational schools.

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00:18:19.530 --> 00:18:41.070

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Today JKL represents the very best intent of school choice. Our parents and children choose this school because it's a place that recognizes our history culture, and, most importantly, the past harm of Federal policy towards Indian country, which includes genocide, forced assimilation, the boarding school experience and termination.

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00:18:41.070 --> 00:18:57.160

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Any change in Federal Indian education policy today must be done with the goal of strengthening tribal self-determination, sovereignty, and the education of our children to do otherwise would be rolling backwards, and would undermine the success that we've achieved in the last 30 years

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00:18:57.720 --> 00:19:26.639

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: whenever given the opportunity. I'm proud to speak about JKL and its tremendous impact on our community. The school has consistently provided an outstanding educational experience for its students, and I can personally attest to the care and dedication that they show to meeting the emotional, academic, and cultural needs of every student. I myself have 2 kids who attend this school and have witnessed firsthand how JKL fosters an environment where they feel supported and empowered to succeed.

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00:19:26.800 --> 00:19:42.220

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Our children are the absolute future JKL and other tribal schools like it mean the absolute world to Indian country, and we will not stand by idly if policy changes are made that negatively impact our next 7 generations.

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00:19:42.220 --> 00:20:01.089

Chairman Lowes- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Quite simply, we will not do that. At the 2 o'clock session my fellow tribal council member, Aaron Payment, who holds a doctorate in education, and who also has a child that attends that school, will make comments. Stephanie Sprecker, who's a Sioux tribe citizen who is also our education director, will make comments at that time, as well.

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00:20:02.740 --> 00:20:04.149

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you. Chairman Lowes.

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00:20:07.140 --> 00:20:12.780

Oliver Whaley, RACA: The next hand raised is Chairman Ryman Lebeau. I'm going to reset the

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00:20:13.630 --> 00:20:17.660

Oliver Whaley, RACA: clock. All right. Go ahead, Mr. Lebeau.

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00:20:20.290 --> 00:20:30.860

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: I'm Ryan Lebeau. I'm from the I'm the chairman of the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe, not to be confused with the

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00:20:31.250 --> 00:20:35.790

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: the previous chairman there. 1st of all, we'd like to say that

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00:20:35.900 --> 00:20:40.670

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: BIE needed to consult with the tribes, not only on this issue at hand.

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00:20:41.060 --> 00:20:46.470

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: but also in in laying off any employees. That should have been a

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00:20:46.850 --> 00:20:53.130

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: a consultation with the tribes. To begin with, BIE should have told

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00:20:53.360 --> 00:21:06.140

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: DOGE and the White House that we got to consult with the tribes on these important matters, and getting rid of the trust employees that uphold the treaties of our of our people and our tribes.

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00:21:07.710 --> 00:21:12.899

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: And we come from a treaty tribe, where we signed the 1868 Treaty.

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00:21:13.360 --> 00:21:20.130

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: My grand, great, great grandfather, Chief Joseph Forber. He signed the 1868, treaty for our people.

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00:21:20.450 --> 00:21:23.729

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: And we're proud of him for making that decision.

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00:21:24.636 --> 00:21:25.263

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: Because,

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00:21:26.220 --> 00:21:41.659

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: our treaty is not only with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but with the United States Government. And it doesn't. It's not just with the BIE, but it's also with the other all other Federal agencies. Our Bureau of Indian Education schools are a very important asset

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00:21:41.770 --> 00:22:02.260

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: to our rural and remote tribal reservation, that is, 4,267 square miles, with nearly 9,000 tribal members living on the

reservation. Education is a treaty right promised in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty with the great Sioux Nation whom the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe is the current successor of.

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00:22:02.450 --> 00:22:18.130

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: The proposed voucher system, undermines the tribes by proposing that the States and Public schools receive the Department of Education and BIE money to educate native students. The tribes know best how to take care of its own people.

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00:22:18.300 --> 00:22:28.339

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: Not the United States. And that was our point earlier, and that's why our people signed the 1868 Treaty, because we know how to take care of our own.

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00:22:28.550 --> 00:22:43.570

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: If the United States Department of Education and Interior directs Federal funding to the States for native students. Then tribes are at the mercy of the States and the public schools, where no trust or treaty obligation exists.

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00:22:44.730 --> 00:22:59.599

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: The Cheyenne River Sioux tribe objects to any proposed voucher system that diverts money from the Department of Education and the BIE to other entities. It is important to maintain this trust and treaty

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00:22:59.770 --> 00:23:03.659

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: relationship that the tribes have with the United States.

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00:23:04.030 --> 00:23:11.290

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: It is important to bring back all of the Haskell and SIPI employees that were terminated.

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00:23:12.170 --> 00:23:20.129

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: And in conclusion, the evidence from multiple States shows that the vouchers programs

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00:23:20.440 --> 00:23:41.950

Chairman Ryman LeBeau: do not improve native student outcomes, but instead, weaken tribal schools, cut essential services and violate treaty obligations. Protecting native education means ensuring that Federal education dollars stay within BIE and tribally controlled schools, not private institutions, with no accountability to native communities. Thank you.

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00:23:43.240 --> 00:23:44.670

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Chairman Lebeau.

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00:23:46.230 --> 00:23:53.510

Oliver Whaley, RACA: We will next move to the next hand raised. Lori Harper, I will reset the timer.

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00:23:54.450 --> 00:23:57.230

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Okay, please provide your comments.

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00:24:03.750 --> 00:24:08.750

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: Good morning. I'm Lori Harper. I'm the Director of Education for Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe.

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00:24:09.760 --> 00:24:33.639

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: Which is located in North Central Minnesota. The Leech Lake Reservation is located 2 and a half hours away from east and west borders of Minnesota, and an hour and a half south of the Canadian border. I served the Leech Lake Nation in various capacities that include the President of Tribal Education Department's National Assembly, TEDNA, and as the Chairwoman of the Tribal Nations Education Committee in Minnesota.

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00:24:33.830 --> 00:24:44.690

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: I served on the School Board for our school, a tribally controlled BIE operated school by the Leech Lake Nation from 2018 to 2022.

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00:24:44.870 --> 00:24:54.799

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: The school was founded in 1975 on the Leech Lake Reservation. During a time when our American Indian students were facing daily discriminatory attacks

135

00:24:54.990 --> 00:25:03.399

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: that impacted our right to a safe learning environment. I say, our as I was a 5 year old in kindergarten when this walkout occurred.

136

00:25:04.020 --> 00:25:09.759

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: The daily verbal and mental assaults affected our academic success and mental well-being.

137

00:25:09.880 --> 00:25:16.439

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: In the spring of 1976, the State of Minnesota threatened to hold our students back and not allow them to graduate.

138

00:25:16.790 --> 00:25:24.449

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: The Leech Lake Nation, organized under the newly enacted Indian Self-determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975,

139

00:25:24.720 --> 00:25:29.880

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: and established the school, the 1st tribally controlled school in Minnesota.

140

00:25:30.380 --> 00:25:35.359

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: The contracts for the funding were negotiated directly with the Federal Government

141

00:25:35.560 --> 00:25:41.829

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: and upheld our sovereignty. Our right to self-govern and provide essential services, including education of our children.

142

00:25:42.000 --> 00:25:44.780

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: As we approach our 50th school year.

143

00:25:45.020 --> 00:25:50.500

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and the school can proudly affirm that we have long been a school of choice.

144

00:25:51.500 --> 00:26:11.049

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: In 1988 the Minnesota Legislature passed a law establishing the nation's 1st inner district, open enrollment policy requiring schools and districts to allow and accept student transfers across district boundaries. In 1989, the schools enrolling a thousand or more students were required to participate in open enrollment. In 1990

145

00:26:11.220 --> 00:26:22.549

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: school year the open enrollment for Minnesota became mandatory for all school districts. This is why any policy impacting native education must be developed with direct tribal input.

146

00:26:22.700 --> 00:26:29.300

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: Tribal sovereignty must not be undermined by diverting funding for trust and treaty obligations to Indian education

147

00:26:29.710 --> 00:26:39.569

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: and moving it to State governments or agency. a 1 size fits all States approach in executive order 14191 is not applicable in Minnesota.

148

00:26:39.690 --> 00:26:48.439

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: It will have the detrimental impact of defunding the school when we are already struggling with less than adequate funding for our students.

149

00:26:48.720 --> 00:26:51.350

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: Mew Minig.

150

00:26:53.380 --> 00:26:54.710

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you, Leader Harper.

151

00:26:55.030 --> 00:26:55.730

Laurie Harper, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Director of Ed: (inaudible).

152

00:26:58.136 --> 00:27:18.590

Oliver Whaley, RACA: We will go to the next hand raised, and I see we've got a few still in the queue, but if we get to the point where we've got time, and there are no hands. We'll give folks an opportunity to provide additional comments. I know we're kind of cutting you short and apologize for that. We just know there's lots of people on the call. So we're just trying to accommodate everybody the best we can. I'm gonna reset the clock.

153

00:27:19.951 --> 00:27:23.690

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Mr. Joe Benally, you are the next Henry's. The floor is yours.

154

00:27:24.820 --> 00:27:30.780

Joe Benally: Okay, thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today about

155

00:27:30.980 --> 00:27:47.929

Joe Benally: executive order 1, 4, 1, 9, 1, and the importance of bringing the highest quality of education to native children in the

United States. Again, my name is Joe Birnali, the principal at Pinyong Community School.

156

00:27:48.080 --> 00:27:59.250

Joe Benally: which is located in Pinon, Arizona of the Navajo nation. We are a very rural school, and we serve

157

00:27:59.380 --> 00:28:18.709

Joe Benally: kindergartners and Pre. K and kindergarten students as well as running a residential program that serves 1st grade through 12th grade students, our students, our residential students, are enrolled at a couple

158

00:28:19.390 --> 00:28:30.390

Joe Benally: of state schools, public schools, and then other BIE schools.

159

00:28:31.271 --> 00:28:35.420

Joe Benally: but what today? I wanted to talk about preserving

160

00:28:35.620 --> 00:28:41.400

Joe Benally: the integrity of BIE funded school system.

161

00:28:41.970 --> 00:28:45.919

Joe Benally: and what I wanted to say is that it is imperative

162

00:28:46.070 --> 00:28:50.950

Joe Benally: that any effort to fund an Indian school choice initiative

163

00:28:51.130 --> 00:28:56.879

Joe Benally: must not divert funds away from BIE funded schools like ours.

164

00:28:57.560 --> 00:29:06.739

Joe Benally: The existence of BIE funded schools allows for tribal citizens across the nation to have a culturally

165

00:29:07.090 --> 00:29:11.480

Joe Benally: specific choice of schools in their local BIE funded schools.

166

00:29:11.900 --> 00:29:15.710

Joe Benally: But BIE funded schools can only provide

167

00:29:16.170 --> 00:29:22.179

Joe Benally: the quality of education that native children deserve if they are fully funded.

168

00:29:22.870 --> 00:29:28.899

Joe Benally: Thus, as the BIE complies with executive order 14191.

169

00:29:29.030 --> 00:29:32.819

Joe Benally: Please understand that the best available mechanism

170

00:29:33.040 --> 00:29:37.020

Joe Benally: under which families of students eligible

171

00:29:37.200 --> 00:29:42.479

Joe Benally: to attend BIE schools may use their federal funding

172

00:29:43.080 --> 00:29:46.330

Joe Benally: for educational options of their choice

173

00:29:46.830 --> 00:29:51.130

Joe Benally: already exists in the BIE. Funded school system

174

00:29:51.270 --> 00:29:54.469

Joe Benally: through the tribally controlled School Act.

175

00:29:55.860 --> 00:30:08.809

Joe Benally: So I urge the BIE to continue to aggressively seek full funding for BIE funded schools, and ensure those appropriate dollars

176

00:30:09.060 --> 00:30:17.950

Joe Benally: or funnels to the schools themselves rather than BIE. Headquarters and central operations.

177

00:30:18.450 --> 00:30:21.919

Joe Benally: If BIE funded schools are fully funded

178

00:30:22.590 --> 00:30:26.360

Joe Benally: and the autonomy of tribally controlled schools

179

00:30:26.470 --> 00:30:32.030

Joe Benally: to operate at the local level based on community needs is respected.

180

00:30:32.720 --> 00:30:40.970

Joe Benally: The United States will achieve all of the hallmarks of a successful Indian school. Choice system

181

00:30:41.510 --> 00:30:46.600

Joe Benally: and inclusion conclusion. I want to thank you for the opportunity

182

00:30:46.750 --> 00:30:50.889

Joe Benally: to provide my comments today. So thank you.

183

00:30:51.790 --> 00:30:53.560

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Principal Benally.

184

00:30:54.890 --> 00:31:01.650

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand raised we have is Mr. Cody Russell. The floor is now yours.

185

00:31:06.710 --> 00:31:08.120

Cody Neil Russell: (inaudible)!

186

00:31:08.270 --> 00:31:16.630

Cody Neil Russell: Good morning. My name is Cody Russell. I'm the vice chairman of the Rosebud Sioux tribe. We are located in South Central South Dakota.

187

00:31:17.070 --> 00:31:22.779

Cody Neil Russell: I represent the Rosebud Sioux tribe, as well as the great Sioux nation.

188

00:31:23.510 --> 00:31:39.609

Cody Neil Russell: Our view are the following 4 points, number one. The executive order, expanding educational freedom and opportunity for families is a direct violation of the Federal Government's treaty and trust responsibilities as it relates to our current BIE education system.

189

00:31:39.700 --> 00:31:53.569

Cody Neil Russell: The idea of taking BIE funding and attempting to vouch it out to public and private schools. According to CFR 34. This voucher system does not allow this, therefore, law or laws will be violated.

190

00:31:53.610 --> 00:32:12.930

Cody Neil Russell: Number 2. As we try to understand this new idea of voucher system, Confucianism, not to be mistaken by Confucianism, which is the teachings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius, although there may be a relationship there. But the idea of BIE funding following the student to a public or private school

191

00:32:13.040 --> 00:32:30.929

Cody Neil Russell: would be a major headache for the school administrators. All the different areas of funding like special needs, students, transportation, residential services, and more to be sent to the BIE funded schools would cause the school administrators to have reoccurring headaches.

192

00:32:31.140 --> 00:32:43.600

Cody Neil Russell: Number 3. If the BIA funded students were to attend public or private schools, the mainstreaming of our Indian students would recreate issues related to the old melting pot ideology

193

00:32:43.780 --> 00:32:55.719

Cody Neil Russell: by attending public or private schools, they would not be able to retain and learn more about our culture and history. Lakotaism, if you will, or Indianism, would be thrown out the window.

194

00:33:01.530 --> 00:33:02.790

Cody Neil Russell: Excuse me for that.

195

00:33:08.530 --> 00:33:12.770

Cody Neil Russell: So if you look at the problems that the public schools are now having with the

196

00:33:12.930 --> 00:33:23.620

Cody Neil Russell: curriculum that tells its own story. Then last. The point is, I wonder what would happen if non-Indian students wanted to attend BIA funded schools.

197

00:33:23.830 --> 00:33:36.040

Cody Neil Russell: and that is a reality. There are non-Indian students who want to attend a BIA funded school for one reason or another. That would put the boxes school system in total reverse, wouldn't it?

198

00:33:36.620 --> 00:33:38.820

Cody Neil Russell: And what if an Indian attending

199

00:33:39.190 --> 00:33:47.000

Cody Neil Russell: a BIE school wanted to transfer to another State once or twice would that funding follow across State lines?

200

00:33:47.640 --> 00:33:57.830

Cody Neil Russell: Therefore, we stand very strongly and firmly against the Executive order 14191.

201

00:33:59.270 --> 00:34:00.930

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you. Vice Chairman Russell.

202

00:34:03.950 --> 00:34:10.360

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Alright next hand raised, and I apologize if I'm mispronouncing names. Michelle Beaudin.

203

00:34:11.710 --> 00:34:13.479

Oliver Whaley, RACA: The floor is now yours.

204

00:34:18.600 --> 00:34:23.379

Oliver Whaley, RACA: It looks like she may have dropped off so we'll move to the next.

205

00:34:23.389 --> 00:34:24.929

Michelle Beaudin: No, I'm here. I'm here.

206

00:34:24.929 --> 00:34:27.079

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Okay, alright sorry about that.

207

00:34:27.080 --> 00:34:27.830

Oliver Whaley, RACA: So it's your turn now.

208

00:34:27.830 --> 00:34:38.150

Michelle Beaudin: I am a member of the Lac Courte Oreilles band, and also a School Board Member.

209

00:34:38.797 --> 00:35:07.430

Michelle Beaudin: From the band we strongly oppose the Executive Order 14191. Section 7, with our rural communities our children would have to travel more than 30 miles to get to the neighboring town to get schooling, and there are no charter schools or private schools that have capacity for the amount of students that we have in our BIE school.

210

00:35:07.570 --> 00:35:15.690

Michelle Beaudin: And if the funding gets redirected from our BIA schools. To go to these to a voucher program, it would

211

00:35:16.200 --> 00:35:26.319

Michelle Beaudin: wind up, shutting down our schools. Our BIE system is already underfunded. Our schools don't get enough money as it is, and the tribe has to supplement those.

212

00:35:26.480 --> 00:35:33.208

Michelle Beaudin: The programs that go on within our school system, including buying buses. So

213

00:35:34.140 --> 00:35:42.169

Michelle Beaudin: when we have to deal with racism in these public schools and private schools for our children to get a

214

00:35:42.500 --> 00:35:43.840

Michelle Beaudin: education

215

00:35:44.840 --> 00:35:53.769

Michelle Beaudin: that is very difficult for them, and after traveling long distances to get there, it's almost impossible for them to be successful.

216

00:35:54.260 --> 00:36:02.110

Michelle Beaudin: Our students walked out in 1974 out of the public school because of racism, bullying constant fights

217

00:36:02.750 --> 00:36:07.629

Michelle Beaudin: with not only students, but the racism even extended into the teaching staff.

218

00:36:08.700 --> 00:36:13.879

Michelle Beaudin: So this is why we created our own school, and we've extended it in and

219

00:36:14.010 --> 00:36:26.019

Michelle Beaudin: into our immersion school. Our culture is part of huge part of the success that our kids are able to enjoy today and move on to college, get a higher education

220

00:36:26.420 --> 00:36:28.399

Michelle Beaudin: and become professionals.

221

00:36:30.330 --> 00:36:37.990

Michelle Beaudin: I really feel that this is an assault on our sovereignty and honor children's futures.

222

00:36:38.580 --> 00:36:40.230

Michelle Beaudin: The Government has

223

00:36:41.170 --> 00:36:49.639

Michelle Beaudin: the report from the previous Secretary Interior on what the boarding schools did, and it feels like. This is an extension of what they're trying to do

224

00:36:49.830 --> 00:36:56.519

Michelle Beaudin: again attacking our sovereignty, our culture, and the education of our young people.

225

00:36:57.700 --> 00:36:59.990

Michelle Beaudin: (inaudible) for the time. Thank you.

226

00:37:01.030 --> 00:37:02.759

Margo DeLaune: Thank you, Councilwoman Beaudin.

227

00:37:04.470 --> 00:37:08.520

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand raised is from Chairman Langkeek.

228

00:37:08.640 --> 00:37:10.869

Oliver Whaley, RACA: The floor is now yours.

229

00:37:11.600 --> 00:37:33.920

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you for holding this consultation. My name is Peter Lenke. I'm chairman of the Great Crow Creek, Sioux tribe and chairman of the Crow Creek tribal schools. Here in Fort Thompson, South Dakota, which is located Central South Dakota, along the banks of Missouri River.

230

00:37:34.480 --> 00:37:47.483

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: And you, you asked the question if there are mechanisms exist? You know, that would help this executive order to be carried out as far as my understanding.

231

00:37:48.410 --> 00:38:05.430

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: There are no mechanisms that exist, BIE ESSA and ISEP do not allow native students to use Federal funds allocated for BIE schools, for private faith-based or public charter schools, diverting funds would financially cripple BIE schools.

232

00:38:05.760 --> 00:38:24.589

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: Current budgets within the BIE schools cannot sustain a voucher system, because tracking students under such a program would create a bookkeeping nightmare. Treaty and trust responsibility require that the Federal Government to find native students education

233

00:38:25.110 --> 00:38:50.850

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: to fund native students. Education within BIE schools. Tribal schools are already the schools of choice for many native families, and this is also a legal violation. The Department of Interior previously blocked Bureau of Indian Education from misusing funds for compliance, monitoring, reinforcing the fact that such funds are restricted for direct school operations.

234

00:38:52.869 --> 00:38:58.470

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: If there was such a mechanism that would exist. Eligibility, criteria

235

00:39:01.610 --> 00:39:09.110

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: under the current law, ISEP, ESSA and IDA. Funds are specifically for BIE funded schools.

236

00:39:09.480 --> 00:39:13.700

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: Tribes, not the Federal Government must define any eligibility.

237

00:39:14.480 --> 00:39:27.849

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: Without tribal oversight, native educational funds could be reallocated to non-native institutions. BIE funded schools already have eligibility requirements. Native ancestry, proof of lineage

238

00:39:28.490 --> 00:39:34.550

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: or enrollment in a federally recognized tribal about your system would undermine these safeguards.

239

00:39:35.561 --> 00:39:44.069

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: And the other question you asked about options, educational options existing. Your reservations.

240

00:39:44.220 --> 00:39:47.240

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: you know, most reservations are very rural.

241

00:39:47.490 --> 00:39:58.990

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: A lot of these options are 30, 40, and 50 miles away for our students and a lot of the schools here in South Dakota do not bus high school students.

242

00:39:59.070 --> 00:40:21.460

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: And so our high school students, if they want to go off. Reservation will have to find their own resources to make that journey every morning and every day after school. I believe the closest school we have here is 35 miles away off reservation. We do have students that go there, but with great difficulty.

243

00:40:23.770 --> 00:40:35.730

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: Most reservations lack viable alternative schools, geographic and social economic barriers prevent access to non-BIE schools. Historical trauma reinforces

244

00:40:35.800 --> 00:40:58.486

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: native families, trust in BIE schools. Many distrust, public and faith-based schools, due to the lasting impact of boarding schools, Bureau of Indian Education and tribally control schools already provide culturally responsive education, diverting funding would dismantle these critical programs which we under, you know, which we all know is

245

00:40:58.940 --> 00:41:08.230

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: is vital to the health and wellness of that child, and also the identity, the pride of this student

246

00:41:09.340 --> 00:41:28.589

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: in places like South Dakota, where race, where state tribal relations are at an all-time low. This would have a very, very negative impact on our students if we, if there was a way found to implement this voucher program which there isn't. We've already proven that

247

00:41:29.820 --> 00:41:33.583

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: the race relations in this State, such as South Dakota

248

00:41:35.220 --> 00:41:48.109

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: would not provide culturally responsive education to our students or provide the opportunity to engage in language, culture, or traditional teachings that we provide here within the reservation.

249

00:41:48.580 --> 00:41:58.899

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: ISEP regulations prohibit funding for tuition at non-BIE schools. Exceptions are limited to rare cases involving specific waivers.

250

00:42:00.810 --> 00:42:04.089

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: How would a voucher program

251

00:42:07.810 --> 00:42:19.670

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: would impact BIE funded schools and students in a way that would devastate school funding in 2024, 25 BIE funded schools received

252

00:42:20.460 --> 00:42:37.379

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: \$7,950, 55 cents per student under ISEP. If vouchers were issued to all 400,000 eligible students, per student funding would drop to \$795 which is unsustainable.

253

00:42:37.940 --> 00:43:03.580

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: BIE schools cannot afford additional reductions. As we all know, BIE schools are chronically underfunded. Tribal leaders and members of Congress had testified that current weighted student unit allocations are already insufficient, and further cuts would force school closures within the reservations. The voucher system would contradict Federal law.

254

00:43:03.920 --> 00:43:13.999

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: Congress placed a moratorium in 1995, to prevent the expansion of BIE schools or additional grade levels and ensure funding stability.

255

00:43:15.280 --> 00:43:16.480

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: The legal.

256

00:43:17.440 --> 00:43:23.610

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Chairman. We are a few minutes past the 3 min, mark. I hate to cut you off, but.

257

00:43:23.610 --> 00:43:45.740

Chairman Peter Lengkeek, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: Okay, final position. The Federal voucher program is legally unworkable, financially devastating to Biu schools and directly violates trust and treaty responsibilities. The Federal government must increase, not divert Federal funding to tribal, educate, or not divert funding for tribal education. Thank you very much.

258

00:43:46.700 --> 00:43:47.760

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you. Chairman.

259

00:43:49.062 --> 00:43:56.937

Oliver Whaley, RACA: We'll move to the next hand raised again apologies that we are limiting time to 3 min. But please provide your written comments

260

00:43:57.440 --> 00:44:09.459

Oliver Whaley, RACA: in a more extensive manner, covering, you know all these items that we're not able to cover today, and we will review those. So the next hand raised is from Crystal Martinez, the time is now yours.

261

00:44:12.310 --> 00:44:38.129

Chrystal Martinez-Tom & Faye BlueEyes - DzilthNaODithHle School: Hello, and good morning. My name is Crystal Martinez Tom, Principal at DzilthNaODithHle Community School. It's a tribally control school located in Bloomfield, New Mexico on the Navajo Reservation. We serve 150 facing kinder through 8th grade students at our school. The point I'm going to speak on is the self-determination framework for Indian education. So Congress enacted the public law, 95, 5, 61,

262

00:44:38.260 --> 00:44:55.060

Chrystal Martinez-Tom & Faye BlueEyes - DzilthNaODithHle School: and public law 102, 97, to set the framework for Indian education. So with the public law, 95, 5, 6, 1 created the BIE Funded school system in charge Secretary of the Interior, with the responsibility to facilitate Indian control

263

00:44:55.090 --> 00:45:14.470

Chrystal Martinez-Tom & Faye BlueEyes - DzilthNaODithHle School: of Indian affairs and all matters related in education. So public law 102 97 tribally Control Schools Act further advanced the self-determination framework for Indian education by empowering tribes to elect to take over the operation of BIE schools in their jurisdiction.

264

00:45:14.600 --> 00:45:30.370

Chrystal Martinez-Tom & Faye BlueEyes - DzilthNaODithHle School: and to tell our education services to community need and incorporate cultural practices and values. So here on the Navajo Reservation tribally control schools like ours, central anchors of community culture, pride and family.

265

00:45:30.480 --> 00:45:56.610

Chrystal Martinez-Tom & Faye BlueEyes - DzilthNaODithHle School: So we understand the unique needs of our community to provide holistic services to our children and families. So, for example, as door to door transportation in rural areas. Navajo language instruction, culturally informed classroom environments under the tribally Control Schools Act. It facilitates our ability to use the Federal dollars to maintain local control in the education of our students

266

00:45:56.630 --> 00:46:06.790

Chrystal Martinez-Tom & Faye BlueEyes - DzilthNaODithHle School: and our families choose to send their children to our school because of the tailored services that we provide and culturally informed programming that we provide to all of our students.

267

00:46:06.820 --> 00:46:24.149

Chrystal Martinez-Tom & Faye BlueEyes - DzilthNaODithHle School: So, in fact, some of our parents choose to try out other educational options. So they disenroll and end up re enrolling in into our school again, because our schools do not have the same offerings. I mean, other schools do not have the same offerings as we do, so they end up coming back to our school.

268

00:46:24.300 --> 00:46:35.559

Chrystal Martinez-Tom & Faye BlueEyes - DzilthNaODithHle School: So this is Indian school choice and local control of education at its finest. So thank you for your time, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

269

00:46:36.490 --> 00:46:38.170

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Principal Martinez.

270

00:46:40.170 --> 00:46:51.090

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand raised is from Vivian MontoyaWatuema. Sorry I mispronounced your name. The floor is yours.

271

00:46:52.220 --> 00:46:59.330

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: Thank you for the opportunity to speak today about executive order 14191.

272

00:46:59.670 --> 00:47:08.400

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: My name is Vivian Montoya Watuema. My name comes from the Salt River tribe down near Scottsdale.

273

00:47:08.530 --> 00:47:10.679

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: and but thank you for trying.

274

00:47:10.800 --> 00:47:16.970

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: I am the principal at which is on the eastern part of the Navajo nation.

275

00:47:17.190 --> 00:47:30.810

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: Currently, we serve about 179 students face through 8th grade. Our population grows on a weekly basis.

276

00:47:31.720 --> 00:47:36.430

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: We have preschool all the way to our 8th graders.

277

00:47:37.200 --> 00:47:48.329

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: Our school is located 1.5 h northwest of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and our community population is 99%. Navajo.

278

00:47:49.040 --> 00:47:53.030

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: I will be speaking about tribal consultation.

279

00:47:53.630 --> 00:48:01.280

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: An important component of the of the congressionally directed Indian education framework is tribal consultation.

280

00:48:01.410 --> 00:48:12.300

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: The Government's consultation obligations in Indian education are uniquely codified in statute 25, USC. Section 2011.

281

00:48:12.710 --> 00:48:33.959

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: The statute requires that on all matters affecting Indian education the Government must conduct active consultation in which the interested parties,

including tribal leaders and school administrators, must be given the opportunity to present issues and participate and discuss the options presented.

282

00:48:34.720 --> 00:48:38.310

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: The Government has violated this consultation requirement.

283

00:48:39.000 --> 00:48:45.260

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: First, the Government did not conduct tribal consultation prior to signing Executive Order 14191

284

00:48:45.710 --> 00:48:54.420

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: which could drastically change the landscape of Indian education. Second, as of this consultation, no specific information has

285

00:48:55.230 --> 00:49:02.570

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: been provided about the Administration's intentions or plans to implement an Indian school choice system.

286

00:49:02.760 --> 00:49:20.249

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: There have been no specific details provided about what funds might be affected, how those funds will be administered to facilitate school choice, or any information necessary for Indian country to effectively evaluate and provide comment on the Administration's plans.

287

00:49:20.940 --> 00:49:33.609

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: It is not the burden of tribal communities to provide information to the United States about available mechanisms to implement a school choice initiative that we did not ask for.

288

00:49:33.870 --> 00:49:38.880

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: Thus I do not consider this consultation to meet the Government's statutory obligations.

289

00:49:39.480 --> 00:49:40.450

Vivian MontoyaWatuema Principal Na'neelzhiin Ji Olta: Thank you.

290

00:49:41.700 --> 00:49:43.339

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you. Principal Watuma.

291

00:49:45.260 --> 00:49:51.770

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand raised is from Nadine Eastman. The floor is now yours.

292

00:49:53.580 --> 00:49:58.049

Nadine Eastman: (inaudible), Dr. Nadine Eastman, (inaudible),

293

00:50:00.460 --> 00:50:08.099

Nadine Eastman: (inaudible), or enemy swim day school. (inaudible), or a superintendent.

294

00:50:08.370 --> 00:50:15.699

Nadine Eastman: I'm going to read part of a resolution that was adopted from my School Board.

295

00:50:16.950 --> 00:50:36.379

Nadine Eastman: whereas the Executive Order, the President directs the Secretary of Interior to review any available mechanisms under which families of students eligible to attend BIE schools may use their federal funding for educational options of their school choice. That's what we're doing here today.

296

00:50:36.470 --> 00:50:49.810

Nadine Eastman: whereas enemy swim day school and all Bureau of Indian Education schools are all 100% schools of choice. Our students and our parents chose to come to our schools.

297

00:50:49.890 --> 00:51:06.840

Nadine Eastman: whereas within the South Dakota, where we're located, open enrollment policy adopted in 1997, all of our public schools became schools of choice. Since students can attend any school regardless of school district boundaries, whereas

298

00:51:07.070 --> 00:51:20.330

Nadine Eastman: the United States Government has a Federal Indian trust responsibility, including education, to Indian tribes, including our tribe, the Sistan, Waptin, Oyate, and the enemy Swim Day school.

299

00:51:20.450 --> 00:51:40.539

Nadine Eastman: whereas the Federal Indian Trust responsibility is a legal obligation under which the United States in quotes has charged itself with moral obligations of the highest responsibility and trust

toward Indian tribes that comes from a lawsuit. Seminole nation versus United States, 1942.

300

00:51:40.570 --> 00:52:06.590

Nadine Eastman: Whereas the Federal Indian Trust. Responsibility is also a legally enforceable fiduciary obligation on the part of the United States to protect tribal treaty, rights, lands, assets, and resources, as well as a duty to carry out the mandates of Federal law with respect to American, Indian, and Alaskan native tribes and villages, and whereas Congress has expressly and repeatedly

301

00:52:06.640 --> 00:52:12.600

Nadine Eastman: recognize the trust, responsibility and in its enactments over and over again.

302

00:52:12.850 --> 00:52:20.339

Nadine Eastman: including the Indian Education and Self-determination Assistance Act of 1975, the tribal self-governments.

303

00:52:20.550 --> 00:52:44.989

Nadine Eastman: Governance Amendments of 2,000, the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994, the federally recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, the tribally Controlled Schools Act of 1988, and Indian Education Act of 1972, the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, and so on.

304

00:52:45.870 --> 00:53:05.689

Nadine Eastman: Whereas constructing and maintaining Bureau funded schools facilities is a major component of the Doi's off of their website, trust responsibility to American Indians, it is a requirement of many treaties, and we are a treaty tribe and statutes, whereas the executive order

305

00:53:06.300 --> 00:53:19.650

Nadine Eastman: from President Trump and Doge to withdraw or avert any funding from the Bureau of Indian Education and the Bureau of Indian Education Schools. That is an inherent trust and treaty responsibility.

306

00:53:19.690 --> 00:53:46.230

Nadine Eastman: and therefore, be it resolved, that executive order. This one expanding educational freedom and opportunity for families cannot subvert the Bureau of Indian Education or the Tribal Education Departments, nor withdraw or reduce any funding designated for BIE funded schools. Further, be it resolved, that enemy swim. Day school opposes this executive order.

307

00:53:46.740 --> 00:53:52.380

Nadine Eastman: and any acts to subversive acts

308

00:53:53.090 --> 00:54:00.820

Nadine Eastman: as an attempt not to uphold the Federal trust responsibility to Indian tribes, including the Sistan Waptin Oyate.

309

00:54:00.870 --> 00:54:09.329

Nadine Eastman: and finally, be it resolved That the enemy swim day school opposes all other attempts by the United States Executive Office

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00:54:09.330 --> 00:54:31.099

Nadine Eastman: to dismantle the Indian education provided through the Bureau of Indian Education, which includes tribally controlled schools, such as Enemy, swim day school and demands that the United States Government fulfill its inherent trust. Responsibility of education to all Indian tribes, including the Sistanwapton Oyate, and our school. The enemy swim day school.

311

00:54:31.100 --> 00:54:32.280

Nadine Eastman: me docus.

312

00:54:33.010 --> 00:54:34.500

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Dr. Eastman.

313

00:54:35.990 --> 00:54:42.590

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand raise is Josephia Dominguez. The floor is now yours.

314

00:54:47.520 --> 00:54:54.649

Josefina Dominguez: Thank you. Thank you for organizing this forum and giving us the opportunity to speak.

315

00:54:54.840 --> 00:55:03.290

Josefina Dominguez: I'm Josephina, Josie Dominguez, Mexican, and Yaki, and also an Aps. Board member from Albuquerque.

316

00:55:03.460 --> 00:55:07.799

Josefina Dominguez: New Mexico, Aps. Being Albuquerque public schools

317

00:55:08.500 --> 00:55:19.479

Josefina Dominguez: in New Mexico. Many BIE schools are located in rural communities far from cities and towns with State public schools.

318

00:55:19.770 --> 00:55:24.869

Josefina Dominguez: These BIE schools require more, not less funding.

319

00:55:25.030 --> 00:55:40.449

Josefina Dominguez: and vouchers make no sense in this context. For these communities there is no choice to attend other private schools, and it undermines the sovereign nations.

320

00:55:41.263 --> 00:55:46.050

Josefina Dominguez: Right to create those choices for themselves.

321

00:55:46.660 --> 00:55:59.410

Josefina Dominguez: The threat to both BIE and State public schools is most felt by native American students with disabilities in special education they are the most vulnerable of all.

322

00:55:59.720 --> 00:56:14.180

Josefina Dominguez: Also in New Mexico we're working hard to revitalize indigenous languages by offering bilingual seals for high school graduation, honoring the critical role of language and by extension culture and history.

323

00:56:14.510 --> 00:56:36.889

Josefina Dominguez: While our State will continue to protect our constitutional right to an education rich in language and culture. Any withdrawal of federal monies will impact the quality of not only culturally rich education, but also special needs education. Again, our most vulnerable native American population.

324

00:56:37.360 --> 00:56:54.779

Josefina Dominguez: in the greater scheme of things vouchers will most certainly undermine our democracy, and it appears to be the intent of the recent dismantling of Federal agencies, especially in the Us. Department of education and BIE systems

325

00:56:55.000 --> 00:56:59.410

Josefina Dominguez: systems that are at the heart of democracies.

326

00:56:59.580 --> 00:57:11.079

Josefina Dominguez: The voucher effort also dismisses, as has been noted by several people, the sovereign nation status of 1st nations, and most certainly violates treaties.

327

00:57:11.190 --> 00:57:23.999

Josefina Dominguez: Something that here in New Mexico. We work hard to honor in the Constitution efforts to diminish the role of State public schools in a community's overall health.

328

00:57:24.270 --> 00:57:34.910

Josefina Dominguez: and I include BIE schools in state public schools, though they have their sovereign nation status.

329

00:57:35.280 --> 00:57:41.179

Josefina Dominguez: All of this is tied to this effort to divert money by way of vouchers

330

00:57:42.170 --> 00:57:58.670

Josefina Dominguez: we need to unite, and I guess that's my rallying cry. I don't want to lose sight that we need to unite the the Federal and state public systems to the BIE public systems

331

00:58:00.360 --> 00:58:04.060

Josefina Dominguez: against this effort to privatize public schools

332

00:58:04.260 --> 00:58:07.859

Josefina Dominguez: and to undermine democracy for all of us.

333

00:58:08.200 --> 00:58:13.329

Josefina Dominguez: Thank you. I don't want to take too much time, as there are others in in the quay.

334

00:58:14.640 --> 00:58:16.110

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you, Leader Dominguez.

335

00:58:17.700 --> 00:58:24.990

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand raised is from Chairman Casey Velasquez. The floor is now yours.

336

00:58:27.004 --> 00:58:32.259

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: Good morning. Double, Dad.

337

00:58:33.810 --> 00:58:36.110

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: Put a good morning.

338

00:58:36.410 --> 00:58:39.440

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: Several things crossed my mind imminently.

339

00:58:40.690 --> 00:58:44.449

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: One is the Federal trust responsibility.

340

00:58:45.420 --> 00:58:57.319

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: Number 2 is travel, sovereignty, and number 3 is the cultural sensitivity among our native American students.

341

00:58:58.530 --> 00:59:02.600

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: Several things have gone through my mind as I listen to my colleagues.

342

00:59:04.110 --> 00:59:09.160

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: We already have parental choice. As parents, as grandparents.

343

00:59:09.650 --> 00:59:16.579

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: Children may attend a parochial parochial school, a state school, or a BIE school.

344

00:59:17.590 --> 00:59:20.110

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: We, the White Mountain Apache tribe.

345

00:59:20.370 --> 00:59:23.519

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: are greatly concerned that the Executive order

346

00:59:23.670 --> 00:59:32.360

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: will be intercepted to cripple over BIE schools by moving money out of BIE to where we

347

00:59:32.830 --> 00:59:37.039

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: have some issues in terms of the placement of our students.

348

00:59:37.600 --> 00:59:41.270

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: We, the white Montepatrick tribe, welcomed

349

00:59:42.710 --> 00:59:46.300

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: improvements to the Indian education, but

350

00:59:46.720 --> 00:59:50.639

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: we will not see it being teared down.

351

00:59:51.900 --> 00:59:55.239

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: The government to government relationships between

352

00:59:55.670 --> 00:59:59.170

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: the tribes are imperative and important.

353

01:00:00.350 --> 01:00:10.239

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: We want careful consideration and full consultation before any changes are are to happen.

354

01:00:10.740 --> 01:00:15.289

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: The White Mount Apache tribe is a big tribe.

355

01:00:15.780 --> 01:00:20.890

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: We have 3 schools operated under the BIE schools.

356

01:00:21.320 --> 01:00:26.380

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: We have the Cbq. School deemed the tribally controlled school.

357

01:00:26.580 --> 01:00:37.759

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: We have the BIE. Federally run school, John F. Kennedy School. We have the Theodore Roosevelt Boarding School, a tribally Grant school.

358

01:00:37.920 --> 01:00:45.650

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: So we have 3 schools where our Apache students come to Theodore Roosevelt, also

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01:00:45.960 --> 01:00:52.400

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: at times host other tribal kids off the reservation that want to come to our beautiful school.

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01:00:52.750 --> 01:00:55.410

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: as we continue to see

361

01:00:56.130 --> 01:01:05.380

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: as I as a leader of I'm the chairman of the tribe as indicated. I'm a former School Board member, and I'm also a former school administrator.

362

01:01:05.590 --> 01:01:17.640

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: So when I look at these things, they, the important thing as a leader for the Apache people, for my homelands is the culture sensitivity of our kids.

363

01:01:17.970 --> 01:01:20.100

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: the school voucher systems.

364

01:01:20.660 --> 01:01:27.420

Tribal Chairman Kasey Velasquez, White Mt Apache: The way I look at it is, I perceive that as a foreign thank you, appreciate it.

365

01:01:28.490 --> 01:01:30.120

Margo DeLaune: Thank you, Chairman Velasquez.

366

01:01:31.350 --> 01:01:36.669

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand raised is from Brian Wagner. The floor is now yours.

367

01:01:38.850 --> 01:01:48.920

Brian Wagner: Good morning or afternoon depending on where you're located. Excuse me. My name is Brian Wagner. I have the honor of being one of the 8 tribal Ed directors in the great Plains.

368

01:01:49.796 --> 01:02:00.359

Brian Wagner: I am currently the tribal Education Director of Lower Brule Sioux tribe, and I'm also the education consultant underneath that for the Crow Creek Sioux tribe

369

01:02:01.720 --> 01:02:07.960

Brian Wagner: we support as recognized by Chairman Linke from Crow Creek and Vice Chairman

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01:02:08.520 --> 01:02:16.690

Brian Wagner: Cody Russell from Lower Bruel. The importance of these funds, but I'd like to draw everyone's attention to the legal side of this.

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01:02:16.960 --> 01:02:20.550

Brian Wagner: If you look at the Executive order 1, 4, 1, 9, 1

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01:02:21.130 --> 01:02:26.150

Brian Wagner: section B, or, excuse me. Section 8. General provisions. B States.

373

01:02:26.430 --> 01:02:31.320

Brian Wagner: This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law.

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01:02:31.510 --> 01:02:39.419

Brian Wagner: and subject to the availability of appropriations. So even President Trump acknowledged that there are laws that have to be followed.

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01:02:39.720 --> 01:02:46.829

Brian Wagner: and funding is a reality. In order to operate under ISP regulations

376

01:02:46.960 --> 01:03:13.410

Brian Wagner: in order to receive isep funding. You have to have lineage, and you have to be enrolled in that BIE funded school. If you're not enrolled in a BIE funded school for more than 10 consecutive days the school system is required to drop you, and then you no longer get counted towards average daily membership, which is how the schools receive their funding, and I can read 16 or more examples, and, in fact, the whole

377

01:03:13.590 --> 01:03:25.270

Brian Wagner: 25 cfr. Talks about how the funds are to be distributed and who should receive them, and I will submit written documentation later to the support of time. I'm not going to read all of that.

378

01:03:25.470 --> 01:03:32.560

Brian Wagner: So the point being isep. Regulations cannot be met if you try to move to a voucher system, thereby breaking the law.

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01:03:32.570 --> 01:03:43.749

Brian Wagner: Secondly, a moratorium was established in 1995 by Congress, preventing tribes and BIE funded schools from adding either new schools or even

380

01:03:43.750 --> 01:04:04.849

Brian Wagner: for existing schools, adding grades, levels so like, if you were A. K. Through theater school. You could not add grade 4, 5, or 6. You had to remain where you were in 1995. This moratorium. Excuse me. This executive order violates that moratorium established by Congress, therefore, again illegal and inappropriate.

381

01:04:05.030 --> 01:04:07.899

Brian Wagner: In addition to Isep and the moratorium.

382

01:04:08.170 --> 01:04:23.140

Brian Wagner: there are also sections under idea, 300 707 B. States that the funds provided by the Secretary of Education to the Secretary of Interior is for the children enrolled in BIE funded schools

383

01:04:23.430 --> 01:04:43.430

Brian Wagner: under Essa. Section 1, 1, 2, 1 grants for the outlying area, and the Secretary of Interior Subsection, d. 1. a. States. The funds received are for the Indian children on reservations served by elementary and secondary schools, operated or supported by the Department of the Interior.

384

01:04:43.550 --> 01:04:52.449

Brian Wagner: Therefore, following President Trump's Executive order, Crow Creek, lower Bruel, and I believe all of the people that are on this call

385

01:04:52.670 --> 01:04:55.240

Brian Wagner: support the statement that

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01:04:55.390 --> 01:05:06.259

Brian Wagner: this executive order cannot be fulfilled because it violates existing law, and also do the availability of funds. And therefore it is our position

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01:05:06.400 --> 01:05:20.609

Brian Wagner: that your response, Director Derriman, should be that we cannot legally implement a voucher program under the Bureau of Indian Education. Thank you for the opportunity to speak, and I will submit written documentation at a later time.

388

01:05:21.950 --> 01:05:23.380

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you, Leader Wagner.

389

01:05:24.540 --> 01:05:29.790

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Alright. The next hand in the queue is from Adam. Begay, the floor is now yours.

390

01:05:31.030 --> 01:05:49.755

Adam Begaye: Yes, good morning, ladies and gentlemen, or Good afternoon. If you're on the East Coast, my name is Adam. Begay, I am the chairman of the Board for Sipi, which is a national tribal Community college that serves all 575 native American tribes across America this morning. I like to provide a quick

391

01:05:50.720 --> 01:06:08.370

Adam Begaye: statement on behalf of the Board of Regents. We do serve all 575 native American tribes across Sippy is a national known as a national Community college, tribal Community college, and we are able to provide an insight of the

392

01:06:08.560 --> 01:06:10.499

Adam Begaye: executive orders that have been

393

01:06:10.700 --> 01:06:29.309

Adam Begaye: impacting upon our National Tribal Community College. But the key factors of this is that we would like to continue to provide a good implementation of consultation through the tribal leadership. Sippy is a BIE community. College

394

01:06:31.270 --> 01:06:39.650

Adam Begaye: regards to the executive order signed on January 29, th 2025 aims to broaden the educational choices for families, including those served by BIE

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01:06:40.230 --> 01:06:46.599

Adam Begaye: institutions, such as sipping the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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01:06:47.219 --> 01:07:08.560

Adam Begaye: One of the things that would be impacting on us is the review of the funding mechanism. The Secretary of Interior is directed to assess our families of students eligible to attend die schools to utilize Federal funding for various educational options, including private,

faith-based or public charter schools. This review could influence funding structures at the institutions, such as Sipi.

397

01:07:11.450 --> 01:07:31.409

Adam Begaye: the Executive Order emphasized on expanding a shift and funding enrollment patterns at BIE institutions such as Sipi. We also like to be able to engage with our stakeholders to participate actively, participate on the ongoing tribal consultation. To ensure that all tribes perspective are considered in the implementation of the executive order.

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01:07:31.962 --> 01:07:56.649

Adam Begaye: Sipi is looking forward to strengthening partnership with tribal nations in response to the executive order by the following several key steps, number one, engage in tribal consultation, as we are this morning, number 2 is develop a culturally relevant education programs partnering with tribal nations to create programs that align with their workforce and educational needs expand curricula, focus on indigenous knowledge, governance and economic development. To support tribal sovereignty

399

01:07:56.650 --> 01:08:14.970

Adam Begaye: number 3 is to establish funding and scholarship opportunities at Sippy on the Board of Regents. We like to be able to work with tribal leaders to secure grants and funding from Federal and private sources, to supplement potential funding shifts caused by the Executive order develop tribal, sponsored scholarships to ensure that native American students

400

01:08:14.970 --> 01:08:30.639

Adam Begaye: continue to access higher education without financial barriers. Number 4 strengthen vocational and career training, collaborating with tribal economic development offices, design, career pathways and high demand fields such as healthcare, environmental science and renewable energy.

401

01:08:30.640 --> 01:08:52.010

Adam Begaye: The last but importantly advocate for policy protection, join forces with tribal nations to lobby Congress and the Department Interior, to safeguard funding for BIE institutions like such as Sipi keep protections under the Snyder Act for Sippy and Haskell. The act authorizes Congress to appropriate funds for native American education, including institutions such as Sipi.

402

01:08:52.010 --> 01:09:04.589

Adam Begaye: This ensures Sippy receives financial support through the BIE and Department of Interior is also a trust, responsibility, protection from defunding or closure. Since Sipi operates under BIE oversight, the Snyder act

403

01:09:05.260 --> 01:09:06.180

Adam Begaye: protective

404

01:09:06.550 --> 01:09:18.350

Adam Begaye: income, such as results to shift from shifting Federal educational policies. Any changes affecting sippy funding must comply with the Federal commitment to native American education established by the act.

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01:09:18.970 --> 01:09:21.770

Adam Begaye: In closing. I always like to call upon all

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01:09:21.970 --> 01:09:27.090

Adam Begaye: tribal leaders, and also tribal educational leaders that are on this call to please to

407

01:09:27.180 --> 01:09:43.169

Adam Begaye: have a conversation with Sippy. We are a national tribal community college who has been impacted along with Haskell respectfully. Haskell is widely known across America across native American communities, but little, do no little to know

408

01:09:43.170 --> 01:10:05.280

Adam Begaye: that people know about Sippy, and we are here. We are still resilient. We will still continue to operate through the courage and the resilience of our sippy students. I will leave my contact information in the chat. Please reach out. We love to come out to your tribal nations, and talk about how we can be able to influence and affect our tribal higher education system. Thank you. God bless.

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01:10:06.340 --> 01:10:07.730

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Chairman Mcgay.

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01:10:09.330 --> 01:10:14.520

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand raised is from Michael Lewis. The floor is now yours.

411

01:10:16.300 --> 01:10:34.053

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: Hi, so I am calling on behalf of the Nava nation. I just wanna 1st say that the office of the President is working with the Nava Nation Council to come up with written comments, and we plan on submitting those in the next week. But just to get something on the record. For right now.

412

01:10:34.840 --> 01:10:58.249

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: we Navajo, the Navajo nation, has over 70,000 students attending over 150 schools. These schools include a mix of public state schools tribally controlled schools under 297, 6, 8 contracts, and 31 of the 55 Vae operated schools. So we have a big stake in making sure that the vie operated schools continue to function.

413

01:10:58.290 --> 01:11:20.989

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: If we are going to introduce more school choice into the system, we would prefer those programs to be run through the tribes at the tribal level. So we think of it more as an issue of tribal sovereignty that we control the mechanisms to which the school choice happens to focus in on the specific topics that were requested.

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01:11:21.516 --> 01:11:24.770

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: We are not aware of any legal mechanisms

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01:11:24.890 --> 01:11:33.753

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: that would divert current funding. Certainly not the Isep or the BIE funds. Maybe there are some grants.

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01:11:34.490 --> 01:11:51.529

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: I we've heard that there I we need to look into it more. But there may be some specific grants that are currently going out to the Department of Education that could be diverted into this kind of a program. But our preference would be that Congress take action to create a new source of funding.

417

01:11:51.580 --> 01:12:07.705

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: whether it's a scholarship or a voucher program that can be run by the tribes directly, and not that any funding be taken away from current programs to the extent that existing mechanisms do, that there are existing mechanisms that could be used.

418

01:12:09.390 --> 01:12:31.530

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: we are concerned about the eligibility criteria, the executive order, as it reads, says all students eligible to attend BIE schools. Currently, and we need to confirm the numbers. But we believe there are about 46,000 students enrolled in BIE schools, but between 400 600,000 students who are potentially eligible.

419

01:12:31.770 --> 01:12:35.680

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: So in theory, a hundred 1,000 students could enroll in this program.

420

01:12:36.080 --> 01:12:58.709

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: and none of them would none of them need to be currently attending a BIE school, and that could deplete 100% of whatever funding goes to the BIE schools to take care of school students who aren't. Even in the BA schools. This is important because the BIE schools tend to be located in the most remote parts of the reservations. Going to the 3rd question, really quick.

421

01:12:58.710 --> 01:13:12.769

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: We did a search on the National Center for Education statistics. There are only 4 private schools located within the Nava nation boundaries and 9 private schools, an additional 9 private schools within a 30 min drive of the Nava Nation boundaries.

422

01:13:12.950 --> 01:13:40.780

Michael Lewis, Navajo Nation Washington Office: If a student wanted to attend from Cayenta at a private school, they would have to drive over 70 miles each way to go to school. So just as a practical matter, if this were extended to Navajo students. We're concerned that very few of them would actually be able to get the benefit of it, because most of them it's just too long a drive, and the only practical option would be to attend the local BIE school or enroll in a residential school which is not going to be practical for all parents. Thank you.

423

01:13:42.700 --> 01:13:44.040

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you, Mr. Lewis.

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01:13:45.360 --> 01:13:52.040

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand raised it looks like is from a representative from Wahila Indian School. The floor is now yours.

425

01:13:53.590 --> 01:13:54.889

Wa He Lut Indian School: Thank you very much.

426

01:13:56.050 --> 01:14:17.469

Wa He Lut Indian School: Thank you very much. I'm Harvey Whitford, superintendent and principal of Wahilude Indian School. I'm a member of the Blackfeet Indian nation, our school at Wahilude Indian School. We're a rural Indian school along the banks of the Nisqually River.

427

01:14:17.510 --> 01:14:31.309

Wa He Lut Indian School: Our students come from primarily the Nisqually Indian tribe, Puyallup tribe, Chehalis tribe, Squaxon tribe, Skohomish tribe, and many other tribal affiliations. Kindergarten to 8th grade

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01:14:31.800 --> 01:14:35.150

Wa He Lut Indian School: Wailu Indian school in the highest terms

429

01:14:35.270 --> 01:14:39.550

Wa He Lut Indian School: adamantly opposes this executive order of a voucher system.

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01:14:41.470 --> 01:14:50.990

Wa He Lut Indian School: Wahoo, Indian School Academic program is very strong. Our native culture and native native language programs are very strong.

431

01:14:51.240 --> 01:14:55.599

Wa He Lut Indian School: Our native songs and dances are performed at the school regularly.

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01:14:55.970 --> 01:15:02.009

Wa He Lut Indian School: This is just a. This new voucher program is just a new form of Indian assimilation.

433

01:15:02.260 --> 01:15:08.120

Wa He Lut Indian School: I was a product of the Indian relocation program in the 19 sixties. As a child

434

01:15:08.900 --> 01:15:12.140

Wa He Lut Indian School: I might have been just 4 or 5 years old at the time

435

01:15:12.920 --> 01:15:24.780

Wa He Lut Indian School: the Indian Relocation program in 1960 was a form of assimilation of Indian culture language, our ways of life and termination of our Indian reservations.

436

01:15:25.690 --> 01:15:28.049

Wa He Lut Indian School: an assimilation of our families.

437

01:15:30.040 --> 01:15:42.900

Wa He Lut Indian School: This attempt of sending our Indian children to non-indian schools is just a new modern day form of assimilating our Indian children into a realm of non-indian educational institutions.

438

01:15:43.330 --> 01:15:47.070

Wa He Lut Indian School: My mother was taken to the boarding school as a child.

439

01:15:47.290 --> 01:15:49.500

Wa He Lut Indian School: to be SIM, to be assimilated.

440

01:15:49.710 --> 01:15:53.629

Wa He Lut Indian School: and to learn English, because her 1st language of Blackfeed.

441

01:15:53.990 --> 01:16:00.199

Wa He Lut Indian School: So she was taken from my grandparents sent to the boarding school to be assimilator.

442

01:16:01.460 --> 01:16:03.100

Wa He Lut Indian School: This is the same thing.

443

01:16:03.610 --> 01:16:11.089

Wa He Lut Indian School: It's just a modern day form of termination of BIE schools, and trust responsibility of the Federal Government

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01:16:11.200 --> 01:16:13.480

Wa He Lut Indian School: that is sealed in Federal law.

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01:16:15.310 --> 01:16:17.980

Wa He Lut Indian School: Our traditional lands were taken from us.

446

01:16:18.790 --> 01:16:26.310

Wa He Lut Indian School: an attempt to strip us of our culture, our traditions, our language, ways of life.

447

01:16:27.370 --> 01:16:29.210

Wa He Lut Indian School: But we are still here.

448

01:16:30.260 --> 01:16:36.379

Wa He Lut Indian School: We are still dancing, we are still drumming, we are still singing.

449

01:16:36.690 --> 01:16:39.530

Wa He Lut Indian School: we are still making our traditional regalia.

450

01:16:39.750 --> 01:16:53.170

Wa He Lut Indian School: We are still honoring our cultural and traditional ways. Again, Wahilut Indian school strongly opposes this executive order and attempt to terminate BIE schools. Thank you for hearing me.

451

01:16:54.180 --> 01:16:55.630

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Principal Whitney.

452

01:16:57.310 --> 01:17:03.679

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand we have raised is from Mr. David Nez. The floor is now yours.

453

01:17:05.000 --> 01:17:08.150

David Nez: Good morning. Thank you for this opportunity to.

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01:17:08.640 --> 01:17:11.599

David Nez: I'll speak on this issue.

455

01:17:12.020 --> 01:17:17.029

David Nez: My name is David Nez. I'm the superintendent and principal at Pine Hill Schools.

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01:17:17.690 --> 01:17:22.980

David Nez: We are located on the in central western New Mexico.

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01:17:23.080 --> 01:17:28.920

David Nez: We are one of the satellite reservations on the Navajo nation, and we are

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01:17:29.782 --> 01:17:38.490

David Nez: and incorporated under New Mexico. We are a tribally controlled school. As the Raymonajo School Board Incorporated.

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01:17:40.270 --> 01:17:49.660

David Nez: We are located in a mountainous rural area, and the nearest town to us 2 of them. They're 60 miles away.

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01:17:50.670 --> 01:17:57.279

David Nez: so we support families right to choose the school. That is the best fit for their child.

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01:17:57.800 --> 01:18:02.749

David Nez: However, if funds are redirected from the tribally controlled schools.

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01:18:02.920 --> 01:18:15.979

David Nez: yeah, operated schools to support a Federal school voucher program and initiative, the quality of educational services in our area will significantly decline.

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01:18:16.550 --> 01:18:27.149

David Nez: tribally control schools on the Navajo nation, stretch the Federal dollars they receive through their grant agreements with the BIE to serve the families as best they can.

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01:18:27.650 --> 01:18:36.210

David Nez: Fewer Federal dollars will mean cuts to services, staff and programs that our families currently rely on.

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01:18:36.550 --> 01:18:44.490

David Nez: such as comprehensive special education services, especially native language and culture programs.

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01:18:44.670 --> 01:18:47.899

David Nez: Other schools in the area, particularly

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01:18:48.020 --> 01:18:56.179

David Nez: private schools, do not offer the same accessibility. And again, especially the native language and culture programs.

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01:18:56.380 --> 01:18:58.740

David Nez: Additionally, we are skeptical.

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01:18:58.840 --> 01:19:08.929

David Nez: That current funding levels, if converted to vouchers, would effectively facilitate access to other school options for the families we serve.

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01:19:09.290 --> 01:19:12.870

David Nez: Our school already struggles with chronic underfunding

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01:19:13.090 --> 01:19:17.830

David Nez: and a lower per pupil allocation than other schools in the area.

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01:19:18.400 --> 01:19:22.440

David Nez: Our school serves very rural parts of the Navajo nation.

473

01:19:22.580 --> 01:19:28.299

David Nez: and we are often the only accessible school in the area for our families.

474

01:19:28.730 --> 01:19:41.719

David Nez: If a portion of, or all of our funds were converted into, vouchers, it is highly doubtful that these vouchers would meaningfully make a difference to our students. Educational options.

475

01:19:42.130 --> 01:19:52.440

David Nez: vouchers do not adequately account for the admission requirements of private and sectarian schools, such as grade point, average or testing requirements.

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01:19:53.400 --> 01:19:55.390

David Nez: Also, I'd like to add

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01:19:55.660 --> 01:20:07.529

David Nez: that the United States and its agency must comply with the consultation requirements set forth in 25 USC. Subsection, 201, 1

478

01:20:07.970 --> 01:20:24.149

David Nez: that establishes a unique trust, responsibilities to all tribal nations and at a minimum government to government consultation before taking any action on executive order 1, 4, 1, 9, 1.

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01:20:24.630 --> 01:20:29.030

David Nez: That means each tribe. Because we are all unique.

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01:20:29.140 --> 01:20:37.809

David Nez: The Navajo nation is uniquely different from the Lakota nations or the Pueblo nations, so they need to

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01:20:38.580 --> 01:20:46.259

David Nez: engage in a consultation process with each tribe in a government to government consultation process.

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01:20:46.690 --> 01:20:53.660

David Nez: and also Congress has not rescinded the Indian Self-determination and Indian Assistance Act

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01:20:53.790 --> 01:20:56.960

David Nez: or the Control tribally Controlled Schools act

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01:20:57.360 --> 01:21:02.190

David Nez: that both that govern both funding to all tribal schools.

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01:21:02.390 --> 01:21:13.150

David Nez: therefore, any proposed changes to the funding of tribal schools is prohibited, unless and tell. These statutes are rescinded or amended by Congress.

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01:21:14.240 --> 01:21:22.740

David Nez: and I would like to also stretch again that stress again, that if they convert these into funds into vouchers.

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01:21:23.180 --> 01:21:30.119

David Nez: they're going to take away dollars that are very scarce to us already. We are

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01:21:30.520 --> 01:21:35.540

David Nez: grossly underfunded compared to public schools. We're in New Mexico

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01:21:35.860 --> 01:21:44.739

David Nez: and in New Mexico, the public school. They get an average of about \$14,000 per student in the public school.

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01:21:44.920 --> 01:21:51.059

David Nez: in the tribally controlled schools we get around roughly 7 between 7 and \$8,000.

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01:21:51.320 --> 01:22:00.450

David Nez: So if you convert these dollars into voucher programs. It's going to take away this money that we already have. That is already scarce.

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01:22:00.780 --> 01:22:01.810

David Nez: So

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01:22:02.760 --> 01:22:22.210

David Nez: the other point that I think, is very important is the consultation process. I think that the Federal Government needs to engage in a tribal tribe to Federal Government consultation with each tribe. Thank you very much, and I appreciate this time to speak on this issue. Thank you.

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01:22:23.580 --> 01:22:25.289

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you, Superintendent Ness.

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01:22:26.680 --> 01:22:32.870

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Alright. The next hand in the queue that we have is Monica Cleveland. The floor is now yours.

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01:22:35.470 --> 01:22:41.719

Monica Cleveland: Good morning. My name is Monica Cleveland. I have children on the ton of nation centers for rent school.

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01:22:42.217 --> 01:22:49.860

Monica Cleveland: I'm a parent, and I have children who've gone through the BIE graduated. I have children who are currently attending the BIE.

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01:22:50.110 --> 01:23:18.040

Monica Cleveland: And I just wanted to share this. Our students travel long bus rides to school to receive already limited services due to funding. This not only affects our students, but it takes jobs away from the tribal members who are employed by the schools taking our schools away and sending our children off. The reservation is almost a repeat of history off the reservation. Our children will face discrimination. They will be given the short end of the opportunities because of the color of their skin, and where they come from

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01:23:18.100 --> 01:23:38.780

Monica Cleveland: one can only imagine the obstacles of our special needs. Children they'll have to face. This is a move by the Federal Government to steal education from our children. They will not retain any lessons. If they are in constant survival mode, they will not have access to the culture courses that help all tribes revive, preserve, and teach our languages and traditions.

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01:23:38.780 --> 01:23:51.239

Monica Cleveland: all of which are part of our BIE schools. Now the experience in off reservation schools will only traumatize their children and greatly reduce the already low amount of native children who attend higher education.

501

01:23:51.460 --> 01:24:10.499

Monica Cleveland: If we don't have higher education for our students, how can our students step into those positions that protect our sovereignty and our rights and our lands. Since the new Administration off reservation students today who are attending those schools are already experiencing discrimination and racism.

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01:24:10.920 --> 01:24:13.369

Monica Cleveland: that's all I have to share. Thank you.

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01:24:14.560 --> 01:24:15.819

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Miss Cleveland.

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01:24:18.860 --> 01:24:26.510

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand we have in the queue is from Mr. Rodney Borday. The floor is now yours.

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01:24:27.520 --> 01:24:32.740

Rodney Bordeaux: Good morning. My name is Rodney Bordeaux. I'm the president of St. Francis Mission.

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01:24:33.470 --> 01:24:39.540

Rodney Bordeaux: It's a Jesuit mission located out here on Rosebud Reservation. It's been here since 1868,

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01:24:39.830 --> 01:24:43.820

Rodney Bordeaux: and I'm also the former president of the Rosebudsu tribe

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01:24:44.450 --> 01:24:50.410

Rodney Bordeaux: in my lifelong commitment and goal in life is a quality education for the

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01:24:50.640 --> 01:24:52.989

Rodney Bordeaux: are students on the Rosewood Reservation.

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01:24:54.790 --> 01:24:58.869

Rodney Bordeaux: I fully support the Executive order because it allows.

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01:24:59.150 --> 01:25:03.209

Rodney Bordeaux: or Sapo'u Academy, which is A. K through 8 school.

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01:25:03.310 --> 01:25:07.349

Rodney Bordeaux: The access to Federal funding that we currently do not have.

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01:25:07.600 --> 01:25:12.209

Rodney Bordeaux: Our school is primarily funded through private donations.

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01:25:13.490 --> 01:25:15.117

Rodney Bordeaux: And it's it's

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01:25:16.550 --> 01:25:22.829

Rodney Bordeaux: It's kind of been a struggle since the we have to raise funds from donors throughout the United States.

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01:25:22.950 --> 01:25:30.429

Rodney Bordeaux: But we are currently keeping focus keeping funded. We're 10 years old now, and we have a

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01:25:30.770 --> 01:25:33.140

Rodney Bordeaux: 40 students. K. Through 8.

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01:25:33.710 --> 01:25:37.619

Rodney Bordeaux: Our students are enrolled members of the Rosebud Sioux tribe.

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01:25:38.460 --> 01:25:43.729

Rodney Bordeaux: Our school is located on the Rosebud Lakota reservation.

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01:25:45.510 --> 01:25:50.019

Rodney Bordeaux: and I've always supported parental and student choice for their education.

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01:25:51.740 --> 01:25:56.220

Rodney Bordeaux: The Sapu Academy offers an alternative

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01:25:57.000 --> 01:26:00.120

Rodney Bordeaux: and a choice for education for the parents.

523

01:26:01.830 --> 01:26:04.469

Rodney Bordeaux: With that we have small class sizes.

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01:26:05.090 --> 01:26:13.879

Rodney Bordeaux: We stress academic achievement, leadership development or maps test scores

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01:26:14.210 --> 01:26:17.519

Rodney Bordeaux: where our students are at or above

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01:26:17.760 --> 01:26:20.280

Rodney Bordeaux: the grade level. In their testing.

527

01:26:21.370 --> 01:26:26.009

Rodney Bordeaux: We have a few IP students that are struggling with that, but we are working with them.

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01:26:26.120 --> 01:26:30.119

Rodney Bordeaux: and they are gradually improving on their test scores.

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01:26:32.420 --> 01:26:35.920

Rodney Bordeaux: Our school is fully accredited by the State of South Dakota.

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01:26:38.210 --> 01:26:44.410

Rodney Bordeaux: Back. When our reservation was established, our chief, Spotted Tail and Chief 2 strike.

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01:26:46.100 --> 01:26:53.060

Rodney Bordeaux: They went to Washington, DC. And asked President Rutherford B. Hayes to send the Jesuits out

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01:26:53.710 --> 01:26:59.370

Rodney Bordeaux: to educate our people, and St. Francis Mission School at the time

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01:26:59.770 --> 01:27:06.650

Rodney Bordeaux: ran from 1889. All the way through 1970, and they worked with the local parent group, and it

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01:27:07.220 --> 01:27:11.510

Rodney Bordeaux: a transition to St. Francis Indian School, however.

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01:27:12.580 --> 01:27:27.599

Rodney Bordeaux: given the need for academic achievement as well as school choice. The Sapu Academy was reestablished, or the education was reestablished through the name of Sapu Academy in 2013. So we're

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01:27:27.790 --> 01:27:29.380

Rodney Bordeaux: about 10 years old.

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01:27:30.950 --> 01:27:37.460

Rodney Bordeaux: Our students learn the Lakota values the history and the culture as well as language.

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01:27:38.360 --> 01:27:42.100

Rodney Bordeaux: However, our funding is somewhat limited, so

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01:27:42.790 --> 01:27:47.059

Rodney Bordeaux: we need this extra funding to be become a very stable

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01:27:47.440 --> 01:27:54.899

Rodney Bordeaux: school. We want to work with St. Francis Indian School, which is our local BIE funded school. It's just about.

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01:27:55.850 --> 01:28:00.119

Rodney Bordeaux: If you look at a city, it's fully probably about maybe 2 blocks away from here to the east.

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01:28:00.880 --> 01:28:08.859

Rodney Bordeaux: We have a good collaboration with them, and with real. They allow our students to engage in sports activities over there. So

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01:28:09.060 --> 01:28:11.459

Rodney Bordeaux: what we can do is basically

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01:28:11.890 --> 01:28:16.390

Rodney Bordeaux: allow our students enrolled members of the Rosewood Sioux tribe to get

545

01:28:16.750 --> 01:28:21.369

Rodney Bordeaux: another funding source will be a stable funding source, and we can prove

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01:28:21.660 --> 01:28:29.209

Rodney Bordeaux: that our model works, because, like I said, they're all at grade level or above in the maps, testing scores.

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01:28:30.380 --> 01:28:33.410

Rodney Bordeaux: But we don't feel we are taking away from any bi

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01:28:33.870 --> 01:28:40.250

Rodney Bordeaux: school on a reservation within South Dakota, because our students. If they weren't in the school they'll be in

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01:28:40.830 --> 01:28:47.109

Rodney Bordeaux: the Saint Francis Indian School or Todd County School district, which is a impact 8 school funded school. So

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01:28:47.750 --> 01:28:59.699

Rodney Bordeaux: with that, I fully support this. And I think our students will really benefit because we're geared for academic achievements. We have the data to support that. And I thank you for this opportunity. Appreciate it.

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01:29:01.270 --> 01:29:02.549

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you, leader Bordeaux.

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01:29:03.950 --> 01:29:09.830

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Alright. The next hand in the queue is from Miss Ronaldo. Tommy Warito. The floor is now yours.

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01:29:10.780 --> 01:29:35.909

Ronalda Tome-Warito: Good. Good afternoon. Good morning. I'm sorry to everyone here on the zoom. My name is Ronaldomorito, and I have been an advocate for our children with disabilities. For about 26 years I've traveled not only in the State of New Mexico, to various tribes and helping families advocate for their children with disabilities. But all over the nation.

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01:29:35.970 --> 01:29:53.490

Ronalda Tome-Warito: I am currently the 1st native American to ever sit on the Albuquerque Public School School Board, and at the same time also a voice for our children. Within the 68,000 children we do see but receive is also to to remember, to speak for those with disabilities.

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01:29:54.600 --> 01:30:07.439

Ronalda Tome-Warito: The the problem I'm going to really bring forward with vouchers is that what's going to happen when we present these vouchers to families is families are going to have to sign their rights away.

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01:30:07.580 --> 01:30:11.679

Ronalda Tome-Warito: and in signing their rights away. That means that they won't have those

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01:30:11.900 --> 01:30:30.769

Ronalda Tome-Warito: Federal laws that apply to their children with disability to make sure they get those services. So it's it's 1 to really remember that as we proceed forward, those children who are who are not seen and heard are the ones that are going to really be hurt by this whole system.

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01:30:30.900 --> 01:30:53.159

Ronalda Tome-Warito: We have to remember that in Arizona, as they looked at vouchers, they created a deficit within their state. And I think that with with our communities we are going to create a great deficit within having our children have the equal rights and the opportunities to have a fair and equal education. So vouchers are not.

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01:30:53.300 --> 01:31:22.690

Ronalda Tome-Warito: Sometimes I think they're an easy fix that this administration would like to use. But I also remember, when McCain was in office and still alive, that he tried doing that in Arizona, and coming out to Arizona. I had many conversations with him that this wasn't the route to take, so we're here to speak for our children. We're here to remember that those who don't have a voice will at least be presented in those families who may not understand the system of education.

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01:31:22.690 --> 01:31:49.020

Ronalda Tome-Warito: We also have to provide those clear messages that this is not a way to help and fix our education system. I would only hope that this would draw closer to this administration of the needs to honor our tribal sovereignty, our tribal treaties, our cultural reverence within our schools and programs, that this provides languages and helps our children to understand that they are

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01:31:49.170 --> 01:32:03.190

Ronalda Tome-Warito: treated fairly, and that our communities are the present place for them to have this fair and equal education. Don't take that away from him, because I had a great, great grandmother, who was only 7 years old, and walked a long walk.

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01:32:03.190 --> 01:32:28.000

Ronalda Tome-Warito: and it's only because of her that I am here today. So I think we need to really look at what we're doing. And we, as a voice, have to remember that our children are the Silent Ones. But we do use them as political pawns in this arena, and I hope that this administration would seriously take a look at that, and remember that native people were here. First, st as we look at immigration and moving.

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01:32:28.130 --> 01:32:32.659

Ronalda Tome-Warito: that we are the 1st people, and those treaties need to be honored. Thank you.

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01:32:33.770 --> 01:32:36.169

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. School Board Member tone. We're very tough.

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01:32:37.290 --> 01:32:42.309

Oliver Whaley, RACA: The next plan raised we have is from Aaron payment. The floor is now yours.

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01:32:42.840 --> 01:32:55.330

Aaron Payment: Hello! I'm Dr. Aaron payment. I'm a council member for the my tribe, the Sault Ste. Marie tribe, and former president of our School board the Joseph K. Lemson School. So I'm going to hit the points that we identified, real quick and concise.

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01:32:55.560 --> 01:33:06.179

Aaron Payment: So 1st to address the mechanisms, to provide educational flexibility. We must recognize Indian education as a Federal treaty, and trust obligation distinct from diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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01:33:06.280 --> 01:33:29.690

Aaron Payment: We are here to reinforce that any education reform should not negatively impact tribal education programs. Our education right is not welfare reparations or even to ameliorate the impacts of forced assimilation at the expense of 23.5 billion. It is, however, prepaid with the nearly 2 billion acres of Indian ceded territory that made this country great.

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01:33:29.690 --> 01:33:39.270

Aaron Payment: If the Us. Department of education is dismantled. We anticipate a transfer of all Indian education, funding across all committees of jurisdiction and budgets.

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01:33:39.270 --> 01:34:07.589

Aaron Payment: including the office of Indian education, to be moved to the BIE, fully funding tribally controlled grant schools to expand choice for native students, not limited by the current opportunities which only serve 7% of our native students and excludes the 93% and 100% of Alaska native villages provide vouchers for the 93% of our native students who attend the public schools to attend a tribally controlled school.

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01:34:07.790 --> 01:34:32.269

Aaron Payment: Next, I want to talk about implementation and eligibility. Criteria for the 2025 to 26 allow a multi-year transition to align the Federal appropriations. Cycle shift, Federal funding, including impact Aid Title 6 and all associated title funding to support tribally controlled schools transfer statutory authority over native American education, funding to the BIE

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01:34:32.300 --> 01:34:53.560

Aaron Payment: regarding expanding local school choice near schools require tribal formal consultation and consent before reallocating tribal school grant funding, allow our own, our children in public schools to transfer federal dollars from State schools to BIE tribal schools, support intertribal coalitions, to address and meet tribal school capacity needs

573

01:34:53.590 --> 01:35:17.389

Aaron Payment: transition. BIE operated schools to tribally controlled governance where feasible fund partnerships with tribal grant schools and local districts for advanced coursework and special education services and invest in teacher training and certification through tribal colleges and universities. On behalf of my chairman Lowe, who spoke earlier, we invite the secretaries of education and interior

574

01:35:17.390 --> 01:35:42.359

Aaron Payment: to visit of the Joseph K. Lumson Bowting School. So you can see just what can be accomplished with the right investment in our public schools and Indian education, funding our performance far outstrips the local public schools. We are a school of choice, and we are an academy of excellence, so we invite them to come and visit before they make any changes. No changes should be made also in the President's executive

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01:35:42.360 --> 01:35:50.640

Aaron Payment: order on Sections 3, 4, 5, without full consultation and consent of tribal nations. Because that's not

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01:35:50.640 --> 01:36:11.650

Aaron Payment: part of this consultation today. But the 93% of our kids attend to public schools. So we're requesting, formally requesting consultation on Sections 3, 4, and 5. And so I appreciate all of the native people that are on the front line. I am praying that you get to keep your jobs through all this crazy chaos that's happening. We need you

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01:36:11.650 --> 01:36:27.660

Aaron Payment: in the past, where people were critical of the BIA and the BIE, and we will continue to be critical. But you are part of our reach. From our reservations to the Federal Government. We need you on the front lines to protect our treaty and trust obligation. Jamie Gwitch.

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01:36:28.920 --> 01:36:30.300

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you. Dr. Payment.

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01:36:31.480 --> 01:36:37.389

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Alright. The next hand in the queue is from Vaughn Salabi. The floor is now yours.

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01:36:40.940 --> 01:36:42.670

Vaughn Salabye: Hello! Can you hear me?

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01:36:43.270 --> 01:36:43.760

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Yes.

582

01:36:44.520 --> 01:37:00.359

Vaughn Salabye: Oh, yeah, good afternoon. Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Vaughan Salabi. I am the CEO and principal here at Gray Hills Academy High school. We're located in Tuba City, Arizona, Western Navajo Nation.

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01:37:00.770 --> 01:37:04.919

Vaughn Salabye: and we do have a 9, 12 school. But

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01:37:05.150 --> 01:37:12.639

Vaughn Salabye: I just want to go ahead and speak in some layman terms, and I hope our leaders there are listening carefully.

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01:37:12.750 --> 01:37:18.330

Vaughn Salabye: and that they're for the most part of our tribes across the United States. That.

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01:37:18.620 --> 01:37:37.569

Vaughn Salabye: and mostly, and also speak on behalf of the Navajo nation. We do have a really big big issue as far as this choice program mentioned, and 1, 4, 1 9, 1 eo. This is going to be problematic. 1st of all.

587

01:37:37.840 --> 01:37:41.619

Vaughn Salabye: just want to let you know. In our communities, you know, our

588

01:37:42.010 --> 01:37:48.020

Vaughn Salabye: Median income for families is about \$8,000, and

589

01:37:48.300 --> 01:37:52.380

Vaughn Salabye: we want to go ahead and give these families choice.

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01:37:52.790 --> 01:37:58.930

Vaughn Salabye: That's about amount of money that's given to us through Isep. And I think we've been making that work

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01:37:59.310 --> 01:38:05.770

Vaughn Salabye: with our school and that limited amount of funds. Now.

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01:38:06.060 --> 01:38:09.060

Vaughn Salabye: if you think about it, you want to get this out to

593

01:38:10.450 --> 01:38:15.450

Vaughn Salabye: other choices like a private charter or even parochial.

594

01:38:15.680 --> 01:38:18.590

Vaughn Salabye: You probably will have to match their tuition.

595

01:38:18.910 --> 01:38:27.980

Vaughn Salabye: and that's going to be additional, probably twice \$15,000, and this is more money that those families are going to have to pay. Inquire

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01:38:28.110 --> 01:38:30.380

Vaughn Salabye: to get an educational.

597

01:38:30.650 --> 01:38:42.859

Vaughn Salabye: an education that will not be their fit. They'll be paying additional money to go to sort of an alien place where they cannot be who they are, and that's native children.

598

01:38:43.380 --> 01:38:57.580

Vaughn Salabye: So that's something that I want to bring out to kind of give you a picture that we do not have access to these alternatives that should be clear across for all our our leaders at the Federal level.

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01:38:57.710 --> 01:39:01.270

Vaughn Salabye: and that I want to go ahead and leave you with 4 points.

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01:39:01.670 --> 01:39:04.820

Vaughn Salabye: Number one, I think, is it is wrong

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01:39:04.990 --> 01:39:09.339

Vaughn Salabye: to be skipping our Navajo Nation government in this executive order.

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01:39:09.560 --> 01:39:16.759

Vaughn Salabye: Again, that points back to the treaty status that's been mentioned over and over by our past presenters. Number 2,

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01:39:17.120 --> 01:39:19.670

Vaughn Salabye: I think back in 1988,

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01:39:20.100 --> 01:39:29.220

Vaughn Salabye: we had the tribal controlled School Act that gives our native communities the choice for our families

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01:39:29.410 --> 01:39:38.219

Vaughn Salabye: on tribal lands, and especially on big tribal lands, where you have to travel an hour and a half one way to get to another school or town

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01:39:38.660 --> 01:39:40.090

Vaughn Salabye: number 3.

607

01:39:40.690 --> 01:39:47.109

Vaughn Salabye: It's going to cost you more. To give you choice. Transportation alone is going to be eating that up.

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01:39:47.890 --> 01:39:52.120

Vaughn Salabye: and it's going to be more per student for private and parochial school.

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01:39:52.740 --> 01:39:59.010

Vaughn Salabye: and then number 4. I'd like to go ahead and say that we need to keep our native funds with tribes.

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01:39:59.170 --> 01:40:02.300

Vaughn Salabye: They're best served by their tailored curriculum.

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01:40:02.580 --> 01:40:06.139

Vaughn Salabye: That was done and made by local control.

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01:40:06.480 --> 01:40:18.140

Vaughn Salabye: That's been built over time. We need to keep doing that and to finish off, like to have. Here's a mechanism you might want to think about, invest in bi schools.

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01:40:18.840 --> 01:40:21.880

Vaughn Salabye: Let the funds stay with the BIE system.

614

01:40:22.170 --> 01:40:26.040

Vaughn Salabye: and if we have to. Let's add more schools on Indian lands.

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01:40:26.610 --> 01:40:32.309

Vaughn Salabye: And lastly, let's try not to bother our tribally control schools.

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01:40:32.890 --> 01:40:42.950

Vaughn Salabye: We cannot work or waste our monies on legal battles with the living money that we have. So please

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01:40:43.450 --> 01:40:51.979

Vaughn Salabye: let's go ahead and continue to consult and make sure we include our government to government consultation. Thank you.

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01:40:53.420 --> 01:40:55.070

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Principal Salabi.

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01:40:56.540 --> 01:41:02.520

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Alright. The next hand that we have in the queue is Peter Garcia. The floor is now yours.

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01:41:06.930 --> 01:41:08.999

Oliver Whaley, RACA: You are on mute, Peter.

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01:41:12.290 --> 01:41:13.829

Peter Garcia: Okay. Can you hear me now?

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01:41:14.190 --> 01:41:16.909

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Yeah, I'm gonna reset your clock. The clock, too. So.

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01:41:17.650 --> 01:41:18.860

Peter Garcia: Okay, thank you.

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01:41:19.750 --> 01:41:27.149

Peter Garcia: My name is Peter Garcia, Jr. I am the lead councilman for Okawinga, Tribal Nation.

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01:41:27.400 --> 01:41:30.389

Peter Garcia: and we're here in New Mexico.

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01:41:30.680 --> 01:41:38.559

Peter Garcia: 1st of all, we appreciate the opportunity to speak today on behalf of our tribe.

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01:41:38.940 --> 01:41:46.479

Peter Garcia: and then regarding the recent executive order on expending education, freedom.

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01:41:46.730 --> 01:41:53.309

Peter Garcia: and the potential voucher system for students which is going to.

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01:41:54.010 --> 01:41:58.969

Peter Garcia: I believe, hurt the BIE Federally controlled Grant schools.

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01:41:59.220 --> 01:42:07.680

Peter Garcia: and we believe that a tribally controlled Grant school is a school of choice, because

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01:42:08.110 --> 01:42:16.919

Peter Garcia: the tribal members attend the schools that they want to choose. We have kids that attend public schools, charter schools.

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01:42:17.090 --> 01:42:22.319

Peter Garcia: Oh, also, we have a lot of kids that attend

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01:42:22.490 --> 01:42:27.320

Peter Garcia: the Santa Fe Indian School, which is also a tribally controlled Grant school.

634

01:42:27.510 --> 01:42:29.830

Peter Garcia: But we have many concerns.

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01:42:30.150 --> 01:42:38.300

Peter Garcia: Oh, which we will also send a letter by next week, and

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01:42:38.460 --> 01:42:40.740

Peter Garcia: one of the the problems is that

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01:42:41.610 --> 01:42:47.959

Peter Garcia: the respect for tribal sovereignty and the trust responsibility is now being.

638

01:42:48.350 --> 01:42:50.199

Peter Garcia: We feel taken away.

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01:42:50.430 --> 01:42:58.170

Peter Garcia: The trust. Responsibility came in years ago, when our lands were taken away

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01:42:58.550 --> 01:43:01.479

Peter Garcia: and treaties were signed. And now

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01:43:01.820 --> 01:43:10.780

Peter Garcia: part of that was the education part that they had trust responsibility giving us native people.

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01:43:11.070 --> 01:43:12.490

Peter Garcia: That's where the.

643

01:43:12.490 --> 01:43:13.919

Corry Roberts: Who are really.

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01:43:14.770 --> 01:43:22.220

Peter Garcia: 1972 Indian education came into place which Congress passed.

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01:43:22.380 --> 01:43:27.600

Peter Garcia: And now a President is taking that at the way which Congress passed.

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01:43:28.490 --> 01:43:34.000

Peter Garcia: and so the other concern is how the voucher system.

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01:43:34.610 --> 01:43:41.269

Peter Garcia: We need more information on this voucher system, because we don't know how it's gonna affect

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01:43:41.460 --> 01:43:44.850

Peter Garcia: or kids that are in tribally controlled grant schools.

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01:43:45.750 --> 01:43:49.199

Peter Garcia: We have kids that have disabilities.

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01:43:49.410 --> 01:43:54.109

Peter Garcia: We also have kids that are special needs kids.

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01:43:54.750 --> 01:43:59.809

Peter Garcia: And it also affects mental health, behavioral health

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01:44:00.150 --> 01:44:09.090

Peter Garcia: and the transportation. Everyone has said that we, our students, have to ride buses far away.

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01:44:09.310 --> 01:44:13.579

Peter Garcia: So how is that voucher gonna affect? How is it gonna

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01:44:13.720 --> 01:44:24.439

Peter Garcia: to keep our school in place. We have meals that we have to pay for, and then we have a residential school, which is Santa Fe Indian school

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01:44:24.630 --> 01:44:33.720

Peter Garcia: where our kids come from in Santa Fe, from 19 different pueblos or different nations.

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01:44:34.600 --> 01:44:44.420

Peter Garcia: And then the other part is that we feel this is inadequate consultation.

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01:44:44.620 --> 01:44:48.290

Peter Garcia: the timeline and lack lack of clarity.

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01:44:48.950 --> 01:44:55.930

Peter Garcia: We don't know what this is going to all lead to, and I don't think that

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01:44:58.900 --> 01:45:05.190

Peter Garcia: most of you don't even know what it, how it's supposed to affect us, or how it's supposed to work.

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01:45:06.320 --> 01:45:13.579

Peter Garcia: The other is that we need to work together as tribes, and also, as

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01:45:13.780 --> 01:45:18.870

Peter Garcia: whoever worked for the BIE BIA we have goals that we built.

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01:45:19.160 --> 01:45:21.820

Peter Garcia: How are we going to maintain those schools?

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01:45:22.080 --> 01:45:29.379

Peter Garcia: But it's important that we try to work together. I appreciate for

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01:45:30.290 --> 01:45:36.230

Peter Garcia: our tribe that you're giving us this opportunity. I think that there needs to be more consultation

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01:45:36.790 --> 01:45:43.940

Peter Garcia: in in detail which is not happening at this point in time. We're all just guessing what

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01:45:44.160 --> 01:45:45.570

Peter Garcia: what's gonna happen.

667

01:45:46.040 --> 01:45:48.980

Peter Garcia: So on behalf of our tribe.

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01:45:49.410 --> 01:45:53.930

Peter Garcia: I'd like to thank everyone, and oh, no one

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01:45:54.400 --> 01:46:05.459

Peter Garcia: in our way. So with respect, we give this

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01:46:06.940 --> 01:46:10.600

Peter Garcia: verbal consultation. But, like I said, we'll send one

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01:46:11.330 --> 01:46:14.270

Peter Garcia: written consultation also. Thank you very much.

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01:46:15.550 --> 01:46:17.280

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you. Councilman Garcia.

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01:46:18.300 --> 01:46:23.520

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Next hand in the queue is from Lori Korn. The floor is now yours.

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01:46:26.410 --> 01:46:39.290

Lori Corn: My name is Lori Korn, and I'm coming from a different part of the nation. I'm coming from Wisconsin Central, Wisconsin, Wannon, for allowing me to speak. Today

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01:46:39.480 --> 01:46:54.679

Lori Corn: I am the principal of the Menominee Tribal School. We are a face to 8th grade school, serving about 140 students. We are located in a very remote location in Central Wisconsin.

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01:46:55.040 --> 01:47:01.820

Lori Corn: Mts. Menominee Tribal School is a BIE funded school, and we are tribally controlled.

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01:47:02.577 --> 01:47:06.900

Lori Corn: BIE funded schools are schools of choice.

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01:47:09.100 --> 01:47:13.209

Lori Corn: Our stakeholders choose to attend our school.

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01:47:13.370 --> 01:47:20.620

Lori Corn: Mts. Menominee Tribal School strongly opposes executive order 1, 4, 1 9, 1

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01:47:22.014 --> 01:47:30.189

Lori Corn: Menominee tribal school is committed to tribal sovereignty. Indian education is a trust responsibility.

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01:47:30.520 --> 01:47:40.240

Lori Corn: This order is a divergent tactic to take money away from BIE funded schools, which are historically underfunded

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01:47:40.580 --> 01:47:43.370

Lori Corn: compared to what public schools get.

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01:47:43.820 --> 01:47:50.969

Lori Corn: BIE funded schools because of their location, are so remote, we need more, at least

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01:47:51.370 --> 01:47:55.149

Lori Corn: comparable funding to what the public schools get

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01:47:58.000 --> 01:48:14.700

Lori Corn: we? I'm not understanding this order. I I'm left to wonder because we're so underfunded already. Is it because BIE funded schools are being successful. Is is that why

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01:48:14.890 --> 01:48:18.240

Lori Corn: the government is targeting our funding?

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01:48:19.770 --> 01:48:37.139

Lori Corn: I just. We're just not understanding this. Any consultations regarding this executive order 1, 4, 1 9 1. The Federal Government consultations need to be with each tribe, because we are all very different nations.

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01:48:37.330 --> 01:48:40.069

Lori Corn: Well, when and for allowing me to speak today.

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01:48:41.490 --> 01:48:42.969

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Principal corn.

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01:48:45.160 --> 01:49:00.999

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand in the queue is Shawn Biscenti, and we've got about 9 min left. In this session, and just want to remind folks we do have a second session starting a half hour after this session the floor is now yours, Shawna Vicenti.

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01:49:02.031 --> 01:49:08.129

Shawna Becenti: Yeah, it's a shay. Shauna Allison Vicente. I'm the head of School of Navajo Preparatory School.

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01:49:08.250 --> 01:49:20.160

Shawna Becenti: and I will be brief. I really appreciate all the leaders who have read their comments or advocated on behalf of Bureau of Indian Education tribally controlled schools.

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01:49:20.300 --> 01:49:26.400

Shawna Becenti: The point that I am specifically I will make is the statutory statutory mandate

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01:49:26.460 --> 01:49:44.030

Shawna Becenti: mandated BIE funded schools. Appropriations do not provide mechanisms for funding vouchers within BIE system, and any assertion of such voucher system would be an infringement on statute, statute, and tribal self-determination.

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01:49:44.030 --> 01:49:59.759

Shawna Becenti: Navajo Prep. Will submit written comments, but we oppose this executive order. We want to. I know we're all in this for students, and we all want to support our tribally controlled and BIE funded schools. Thank you.

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01:50:01.130 --> 01:50:02.679

Carmelia Becenti: Thank you, leader. Vicente.

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01:50:04.520 --> 01:50:11.079

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. The next hand in the queue is from Tanya Joaquin. The floor is now yours.

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01:50:11.220 --> 01:50:20.450

Tonya Joaquin: Good morning to everybody, or Good afternoon. Good day. My name is Tonya Joaquin. I am from the representing the nation.

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01:50:20.450 --> 01:50:23.280

joy marcks: Hear things like this.

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01:50:24.220 --> 01:50:41.699

Tonya Joaquin: When I'm I am representing the nation I'm speaking on behalf as a parent. My son attended a BIE school from kindergarten to 8th grade. As a parent I oppose executive order 1, 9, 1, 1, 4, 1, 9, 1.

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01:50:41.750 --> 01:50:54.680

Tonya Joaquin: In regards to this I believe that we need to keep our schools open. We need to keep our funding here on the reservation. We're very rural. We have

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01:50:55.210 --> 01:51:02.460

Tonya Joaquin: 3 schools that are elementary and one high school. My son currently attends Chimawa Indian School.

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01:51:02.660 --> 01:51:22.680

Tonya Joaquin: and he asked me to come on today. And so I'm speaking on behalf of the students there as well, and they would like to keep the school open concerned of coming home. Some of the students have gone to boarding schools because of their maybe home environments, and they really enjoy the schools. I also

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01:51:22.900 --> 01:51:42.169

Tonya Joaquin: like the idea of also possibly having vultures within the State of Arizona only because some of the schools here on the reservation need more funding if we can convert that funding into more of the BIE schools here on the reservation. I believe that they will then be getting all the education they need here.

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01:51:45.480 --> 01:51:46.880

Margo DeLaune: Thank you. Ms. Joaquin.

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01:51:46.880 --> 01:51:47.740

Tonya Joaquin: Thank you.

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01:51:50.200 --> 01:52:06.410

Oliver Whaley, RACA: All right. There are no more hands in the queue. We do have about 6 min left, so if you've got a comment, invite you to to provide that comment. I do want to highlight one comment I see in the chat from Eva Kubinski and those on the BIA side. If you have some answer that

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01:52:06.840 --> 01:52:23.690

Oliver Whaley, RACA: you can go ahead and provide that, if not, we can get back to this individual. But once the results of the tribal consultations are compiled, how all the testimony be used, and will a subsequent tribal consultation be held to obtain input on what policy and practice changes are decided before implementation.

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01:52:30.910 --> 01:52:50.980

Carmelia Becenti: We just want to thank everyone for being a part of today's consultation regarding this Executive order leaders. The specifics within this executive order are yet to be determined. This consultation seeks your input. Your feedback will help define next steps for updates. Please visit our website. Vaedu.

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01:52:55.580 --> 01:53:03.929

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Thank you, Dr. Vicenti, so we've got 5 min left. Oh, we got a hand in the queue. Carla, cook. The floor is now yours.

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01:53:05.200 --> 01:53:09.970

Carla Cooke: Okay, thank you. And can you hear me? Okay, my Internet was kind of going in and out.

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01:53:09.970 --> 01:53:11.679

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Yes, you're good.

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01:53:11.680 --> 01:53:19.660

Carla Cooke: Okay, and I am presenting in as a parent. My, of my, I have 2 high school students.

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01:53:20.200 --> 01:53:27.619

Carla Cooke: a and 2 upper elementary students. So I have 4 students that are going to be part of this

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01:53:28.270 --> 01:53:57.509

Carla Cooke: of Bureau of Indian Education. I do have one that had graduated years ago is successful. He is moving on. So our program is working, you know, and I think honestly, this executive order. It is not good as far as educating native students, you know. It's not feasible for us, because

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01:53:57.860 --> 01:54:16.460

Carla Cooke: most of the bureau schools are rural. Our options are limited of private or faith based or charter schools. So and I heard a lot of school administrators, and other executives and chair people talk about

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01:54:17.140 --> 01:54:25.309

Carla Cooke: having rule, being in a rural environment, and it is real, you know. Just thinking. Now, if I had that choice.

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01:54:25.510 --> 01:54:34.798

Carla Cooke: there's none, you know, my high. I don't have any choice of sending any of my school, my kids, locally if I had that educational choice but

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01:54:36.313 --> 01:54:42.799

Carla Cooke: and then also, I think this is a time, too, that school leaders.

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01:54:43.500 --> 01:54:53.170

Carla Cooke: tribal leaders, need to start thinking about how to keep their students in the tribal schools or the Bureau of Indian Education Schools.

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01:54:53.529 --> 01:54:56.879

Carla Cooke: How are they going to do it? How are they going to invest in?

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01:54:57.040 --> 01:55:15.579

Carla Cooke: Make these students want to stay and not ask to go anywhere else because of this activity or this school has this program. So we need to bring more educational opportunities, more enriching resources for them to have access to

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01:55:16.025 --> 01:55:35.819

Carla Cooke: that way. It gives them, you know. You'll get more I guess. Support from your students in that way, you know. So bring in a lot of the things that supposedly you know Private Charter schools could offer. Bring them to your bureau schools and to your local

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01:55:37.633 --> 01:55:45.640

Carla Cooke: tribal programs that you have here. Invest that into the community and the students. And that's all I got to say.

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01:55:50.660 --> 01:55:53.870

Carl Rogers: Am I gonna be allowed to speak? I'm on the queue.

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01:55:54.100 --> 01:56:00.939

Oliver Whaley, RACA: Yeah, we've got a couple more minutes, so please go ahead and provide your comments. This will probably be our last one.

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01:56:01.630 --> 01:56:13.249

Carl Rogers: Okay. So I'm Carl Rogers. I'm an Attorney general counsel for the Taos Pueblo special counsel for Chinomatcha Tribal, Louisiana. They've authorized me to speak with them. Today

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01:56:13.770 --> 01:56:30.950

Carl Rogers: I want to echo what the Crow Creek tribal chairman said. There is no legal way that Isef money can be diverted to this. Any kind of voucher program that would serve an Indian student who is not in a BIA funded school. The statute is express on that.

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01:56:31.140 --> 01:56:34.270

Carl Rogers: So really, y'all need to tell the White House

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01:56:34.480 --> 01:56:41.880

Carl Rogers: this. It's not feasible. There are no feasible mechanisms even as to the DOE money that passes through

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01:56:42.773 --> 01:56:46.890

Carl Rogers: that money has to be spent on Indian students in Bi schools.

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01:56:47.620 --> 01:56:57.969

Carl Rogers: and and we can't tell from the executive order if the intent was to apply this to tribally controlled schools as opposed to BIE operated schools.

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01:56:58.480 --> 01:57:02.600

Carl Rogers: If it is intended to apply to tribally control schools.

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01:57:03.600 --> 01:57:09.550

Carl Rogers: there's another whole layer of statutory provisions that would prohibit this

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01:57:09.950 --> 01:57:21.159

Carl Rogers: specifically 25 Usc. 2,503 B. 2 prevents the Bureau from imposing any special conditions that aren't agreed to by the tribe.

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01:57:21.720 --> 01:57:34.909

Carl Rogers: 25 Cfr. Section 44.1 0 1 says you cannot impose any conditions on this funding that the tribes do not consent to if they're tribally controlled schools.

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01:57:35.120 --> 01:57:38.140

Carl Rogers: So we really feel this is just

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01:57:38.540 --> 01:57:43.340

Carl Rogers: maybe it was initiated with a lack of understanding of the legal constraints.

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01:57:43.520 --> 01:57:55.249

Carl Rogers: I do note that the Executive order said they intended it to be consistent with those legal constraints. Those legal constraints will absolutely prohibit any form of this voucher program.

740

01:57:55.350 --> 01:58:06.380

Carl Rogers: and I want to say just a thing about the consultation obligation. This isn't the kind of a consultation required by 25 Usc. 2011.

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01:58:07.050 --> 01:58:18.810

Carl Rogers: The plan, the mechanisms, the impact, the calculations that has to be presented, not the concept. All we've been able to comment on is the concept.

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01:58:19.220 --> 01:58:48.989

Carl Rogers: but the consultation requirements require the actual thing, the actual plan to be made available for travel consultation, and that, by the way, that statutory requirement also requires tribal consultation on the BIE reorganization plan that was submitted yesterday on the staff, reductions on the buyout effects on BIE schools. None of that happened, and so none of that going forward is lawful. Thank you

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01:58:49.210 --> 01:58:52.110

Carl Rogers: and my clients strongly oppose this.

744

01:58:53.160 --> 01:59:03.020

Margo DeLaune: Ms. Cook. I want to thank you earlier for your comments. And, Mr. Rogers, thank you for your comments. I'm going to turn the time over to Director Dearman for any closing comments.

745

01:59:04.510 --> 01:59:05.800

Katherine Grey Wolf: Really.

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01:59:09.410 --> 01:59:25.499

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: Thank you, Margo, and thank you. I truly appreciate and want to thank everyone for all the comments and look forward to receiving the written comments that everyone is going to be sending our way. You know a lot of questions of what's next. What we will do is we will compile

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01:59:25.700 --> 01:59:29.937

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: all the comments that we receive, and we'll make sure that we have that

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01:59:31.390 --> 01:59:37.500

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: comment, all the comments compiled, and make sure that we're presenting that to our leadership, for

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01:59:37.660 --> 02:00:02.889

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: to help us assist in determining what next steps are going to be. Begin. I want to thank each and every one of you for the work that you do on a daily basis to support our kids. And I want to thank each and every one of you for coming today prepared to give us some very good comments, but with that we do have another session coming up today. If you did not have the opportunity, please make sure that you're welcome to attend that

750

02:00:03.020 --> 02:00:06.169

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: to our consultation as well, and also

751

02:00:06.430 --> 02:00:14.750

Tony L. Dearman, BIE Director: you have the opportunity to provide written comments for the next for the next week. But thank you again. To each and every one of you have a great afternoon.

752

02:00:16.260 --> 02:00:26.539

Oliver Whaley, RACA: And that session starts in half an hour. That would be 1230, mountain, 2:30, Eastern, 1:30 Pacific. You can register on the BIA website, and

753

02:00:26.710 --> 02:00:30.930

Oliver Whaley, RACA: we look forward to your written comments. I'm going to end this session now. Thanks again for joining.