

April 9, 2025

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500
via email: christine.glassner@who.eop.gov

RE: Request for New Executive Order Created in Collaboration with Indian Country

Dear President Trump:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations serving Tribal Nations and Tribal citizens and communities, we urge the Administration to issue a new Executive Order protecting Tribal programs and bringing the United States into the next era of federal Indian law and policy. While we are concerned about the rescission of Executive Order 14112, *Reforming Federal Funding and Support for Tribal Nations To Better Embrace Our Trust Responsibilities and Promote the Next Era of Tribal Self-Determination*, we hope its rescission signals that the Administration is developing something even better.

We note that E.O. 14112 contained important directives for federal agencies that align with the Administration's goals of reducing bureaucratic red tape and putting control in the hands of local government. E.O. 14112 sought to improve delivery of trust and treaty obligations and promote Tribal Nations' sovereign use of federal resources, including by requiring agencies to immediately remove barriers to our access to and discretion over the use of federal funding. It also required federal agencies to assess and calculate their unmet obligations to Indian Country, a necessary step for supercharging self-governance by ensuring Tribal Nations have the resources necessary to successfully contract or compact with the federal government to deliver programs and services to our own communities.

This Administration has an opportunity to use its executive power to revolutionize the Tribal Nation-United States relationship recognized in the Constitution, and to improve the way the federal government delivers upon the trust and treaty obligations for which we have prepaid. During your last Administration, you recognized the 50th anniversary of President Nixon's "Special Message to the Congress on Indian Affairs," which heralded the Self-Determination Era of federal Indian law and policy, the most successful era to date. This year, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA), the law initiating the most successful era of federal Indian law and policy to date, Indian Country is looking to build upon this success and toward a new era in our centuries-long relationship with the United States.

To that end, we call upon the Administration to issue a new executive order aimed at ushering in the next era of federal Indian law and policy—aimed at *both* removing limitations the United States has erected on Tribal Nations' full exercise of our inherent sovereignty *and* fully delivering on trust and treaty obligations, including through supercharged self-governance. This Administration should harness its boldness and willingness to disrupt the status quo to bring historic change for Tribal Nations by reimagining how we are viewed and treated by the federal government. In this new era, we call on the United States to remove unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles and red tape so that Tribal Nations may exercise local control to take care of our own communities, and to ensure that we are treated as true sovereigns.

This bigger, better, more impactful executive order would include the following:

- **Protecting Current Tribal Programs:** Affirmatively state that programs and funding delivered to Tribal Nations and Tribal citizens and communities are delivered in recognition of our unique political status and in furtherance of the United States’ trust and treaty obligations and related statutory mandates. Engage with us—prior to taking action—to better understand which federal programs provide Indian Country direct and essential services and deliver on legal requirements and should therefore be exempted from federal funding and workforce reductions and other actions undertaken to implement the Administration’s policy priorities.
- **Supercharging Self-Governance and Securing Sustainable and Mandatory Funding:** Make all programs provided by the federal government to Tribal Nations and Tribal organizations contractable and compactable under ISDEAA agreements so that Tribal Nations may best serve their communities. Provide federal funds to Tribal Nations without red tape and strings. Fully fund Tribal programs through sustainable, mandatory, and advanced funding.
- **Strengthening the Government-to-Government Relationship:** Recognize Tribal Nations as sovereign governments and ensure our voices are central in policy decisions that impact us, including through Tribal consultation. Move toward a consent model for decisions that impact Tribal Nations, including when federal decisions affect our religious rights, sacred sites, and cultural heritage.
- **Enhancing Tribal Economic Development and Restoring Jurisdiction:** Remove federal restrictions that limit economic opportunity. Enable Tribal Nations to exercise our full jurisdiction over our lands, resources, and people.

We hope that you will harness this moment to create transformational legal and policy change in Indian Country, and we look forward to the opportunity for further discussion of this significant proposal.

Sincerely,

American Indian Higher Education Consortium
California Tribal Chairpersons’ Association
Great Plains Tribal Chairmans’s Association
Inter Tribal Association of Arizona
National American Indian Housing Council
National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers
National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development
National Congress of American Indians
National Council of Urban Indian Health
National Indian Child Welfare Association
National Indian Education Association
National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center
Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund