

March 8, 2005
(Broadcast #05-016)

URGENT ACTION ALERT * * * URGENT ACTION ALERT * * * URGENT ACTION ALERT

FY 2006 Budget Resolution Mark Up: Call Your Elected Representatives in Washington

The Senate and House Budget Committees are scheduled to markup the budget resolution starting Wednesday, March 9. The Congressional budget will then be taken up by the full House and Senate the following week and completed as the Congress heads for the March recess. *NCAI urges you to call your elected representatives immediately in Washington on Tuesday March 8 to tell them you are counting on them to produce a budget resolution that supports strong tribal self-government and self-determination.*

How to call:

- Call 1-888-818-6641 and ask to be connected to your Senator and then your Representative's office or directly call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121.
- Ask to speak to the legislative assistant responsible for budget issues.
- Contact Amber Ebarb at 202-466-7767 or aebarb@ncai.org to report the results of the call.

Suggested messages:

Don't make deep cuts in domestic discretionary programs: These cuts would result in a significant loss of support for numerous tribal programs, deeply impairing tribes' ability to effectively govern their communities. The lion's share of tribal government programs are financed through discretionary funding, and spending decisions have an especially keen impact on Native communities.

Don't make deep cuts in mandatory programs: Cuts to programs like Medicaid, child care, food stamps, adoption assistance, foster care, and the Earned Income Tax Credit would reduce services to millions of people and tribal members.

Don't make harmful and unfair changes in budget rules: Caps on spending and "PAYGO" rules that only apply to spending increases would force deep cuts in vital service to vulnerable citizens and tribes.

Why you should call:

The Administration's proposed budget does not reflect the priorities of Indian Country as laid forth by tribal leaders in numerous budget consultations. This year's budget request reduces effective funding for tribal governments, with significant proposed reductions for programs such as Tribal Priority Allocations, education, contract support, housing and infrastructure, and land consolidation.

- The challenges of litigation and trust management have been borne on the backs of tribal programs. For instance, the Bureau of Indian Affairs budget request is \$108.2 million below the FY 2005 enacted amount. The Administration requested a 10.7% decrease of \$9.4 million for Tribal Priority Allocations, the main source of tribal resources to provide governmental services at the local level for most tribes.
- BIA School Construction would be cut by \$89.5 million in the 2006 request and Indian Health Facilities would be reduced by \$86 million from last year's level.
- The President's budget proposal would translate into a loss of \$107 million in housing for Indian country through the Native American Housing Block Grant and Indian Community Development Block Grant.

Further analysis of the President's Budget Request for Indian programs is available on the NCAI website at www.NCAI.org. If you have any questions, call NCAI at 202-466-7767 or email aebarb@ncai.org.