



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

FEB 09 2015

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Department of the Interior (Department) invites you to participate in several upcoming consultations and meetings during the National Congress of American Indians' (NCAI) 2015 Executive Council Winter Session (ECWS) in Washington, DC.

The Department always welcomes gatherings of tribal leaders, such as the NCAI, as potential sites for Executive Order 13175 tribal consultations and to provide other updates to tribes on our ongoing work as trustee to Indian tribes. For this reason, we have scheduled one consultation and two informal meetings during NCAI's 2015 ECWS, to be held at the Capitol Hilton, 1001 16th Street NW, Washington, DC:

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2015

Contract Support Costs Listening Session (Room: *Congressional*) 9:00 am - Noon

The President's budget proposal includes a recommendation that the Department and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) fund contract support costs (CSC) as a mandatory appropriation. Representatives from both the Department and the Indian Health Service would like to discuss this proposal with tribal leadership during ECWS.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2015

BIE Transformation Update (Room: *Massachusetts*) 9:30 pm – 11:30 pm

Representatives from the Department would like to meet with tribal leadership to provide an update on the Bureau of Indian Education's transformation implementation plan, and to answer any questions from tribal leadership pertaining to Indian education.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2015

Housing Improvement Program Consultation (Room: *Federal A*) 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

The Department would like to discuss proposed amendments to its regulations governing its Housing Improvement Program (HIP): a safety net program that provides grants for the cost of services to repair, renovate, or replace existing housing and/or provide new housing for eligible members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

The proposed rule would update various provisions to align the HIP with other Federal program requirements, allow leveraging of housing funds to increase the number of families served and projects funded, and provide tribes with flexibility to better address lengthy waiting lists of tribal members awaiting housing assistance. HIP personnel will present revisions under consideration and take input on these and any other revisions that may be appropriate.

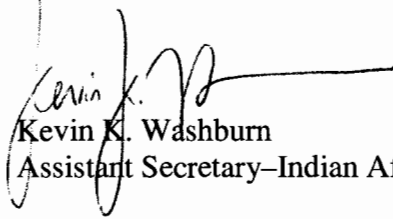
This proposed rule is an important component of this Administration's Tiwahe Initiative. Tiwahe is a Lakota word for "Family" and empowers American Indian individuals and families, and strengthens tribal communities as a whole, through advocating and supporting the family unit in the areas of child & family protection, job training, and housing.

My office will provide further information and materials, if needed, for each of these meetings, on the Department's website at www.bia.gov/consultation.

As you know, meaningful tribal consultation and collaboration are an important part of this Administration's commitment to informed decision making and to honoring the United States' trust relationship with tribal nations.

In closing, I thank you for your leadership and remind you of my open door policy. To assist my office, please visit www.bia.gov/ContactUs in order to request a meeting at any time. If you have further questions, please contact my office at (202) 208-7163.

Sincerely,



Kevin K. Washburn
Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs