



Photo credit: ©Red Cloud Indian School

## Education

One of America's highest priorities must be to provide all of our nation's children with an excellent education, including American Indian and Alaska Native youth. Ensuring equal educational opportunities is not simply a matter of fairness, but even more importantly in today's challenging economic climate, it is an essential strategy for creating jobs and securing the nation's future prosperity—particularly in tribal communities. As President Obama has stressed time and time again, improving American education is an “economic imperative.”

Research repeatedly demonstrates that investments in education contribute to economic growth, while also expanding opportunities for individual advancement.<sup>29</sup> For example, a 2007 Brookings Institution study revealed that investments in education and training programs provide a payoff between five and 15 percent per year when compared to their upfront costs.<sup>30</sup> Likewise, cutting statewide public K-12 expenditures by just one percent would reduce a state's employment rates by 0.7 percent in the short run and by 1.4 percent in the long run.<sup>31</sup>

For tribal communities, the stakes of strengthening education are even higher. An educated citizenry serves as a catalyst to boost economic productivity and growth through a more highly-skilled workforce. In addition, investments in education strengthen the human capital across all sectors of society by attracting new businesses, reducing unemployment, stimulating reservation economies through direct spending, and fostering a greater entrepreneurial spirit for all tribal members to become more self-sufficient.

A 2011 study from the Alliance for Excellent Education indicates that improving the educational outcomes of American Indian and Alaska Native students would have tremendous economic impact. “If just half of the 24,700 American Indian and Alaska Native students from the Class of 2010 who dropped out of high school had

“Let's put our minds together to improve our schools – because our children deserve a world-class education, too, that prepares them for college and careers, and that means returning control of Indian education to tribal nations with additional resources and support so that you can direct your children's education and reform schools here in Indian Country...”

President Barack Obama, Remarks at the Cannon Ball Flag Day Celebration, Standing Rock Indian Reservation, North Dakota

graduated, together these 12,350 new graduates would likely be earning an additional \$147 million each year compared to what they will earn without a high school diploma."<sup>32</sup> These increased earnings would create a wave of additional benefits for tribal, national, and state economies, including:

- **Increased spending and investment:** New graduates' increased earnings, combined, would likely have allowed them to spend up to an additional \$107 million and invest an additional \$40 million during an average year.
- **Increased home and vehicle sales:** By the midpoint of their careers, these new graduates, combined, would likely have spent as much as \$387 million more on home purchases than they will spend without a diploma. In addition, they would likely have spent up to an additional \$14 million on vehicle purchases during an average year.<sup>33</sup>

With this in mind, it is also important to note that the role of education in tribal nations stretches beyond the pure economic impacts. Education drives personal advancement and wellness, which in turn improves social welfare and empowers communities—elements that are essential to protecting and advancing tribal sovereignty and maintaining tribes' cultural vitality.

Despite the gains made in recent years and the opening of windows of opportunity to significantly reform Indian education, many challenges linger that must be actively addressed by all key partners and stakeholders in tribal communities and beyond. American Indian and Alaska Native students face school experiences such as poor school climate and disproportionate school discipline that contribute to their lagging far behind their peers on academic achievement and high school and college graduation rates. For example, the 2011 National Indian Education Study found that Native students continue to score significantly lower than their peers in reading and math in grades four and eight. Only 18 percent of Native fourth graders and 22 percent of Native eighth graders scored proficient or advanced in reading, and only 22 percent of Native fourth graders and 17 percent of Native eighth graders scored proficient or advanced in math.<sup>34</sup> The severity of the current state of Indian education is perhaps most apparent in the Native high school dropout rate. The graduation rate for American Indian and Alaska Native high school students is 67 percent – the lowest of any racial/ethnic demographic group across all schools.<sup>35</sup> Even worse, the graduation rate for Native students in the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) school system is a staggering 53 percent compared to the national average of 80 percent.<sup>36</sup> In fact, recent data finds that while the graduation rates continue to rise nationally, with strong gains by the Latino and African American communities, Native American students have experienced only modest improvements since 2000 and have seen their graduation rates actually decline since 2008.<sup>37,38</sup>

Under sequestration, critical education programs have been reduced curtailing their efficiency and effectiveness. The across-the-board reductions disproportionately affect Native youth and leave America's most vulnerable populations and students behind, representing a blatant abandonment of the federal trust responsibility for educating Native students.

To address this urgent situation and give tribal nations the vital foundation for economic success, the federal government must live up to its trust responsibility by providing adequate support for Native education. The requests below detail the minimum funding needed to sustain a system that is currently struggling and underfunded.

FY 2016 funding increases over FY 2015 levels are needed as current levels of funding continue to be insufficient for effectively and equally serving Native students. Until the federal government fully appropriates funding to bridge the educational attainment gap among Native and non-Native students, the trust responsibility will be undermined. NCAI has provided these FY 2016 Budget requests to illustrate the budgetary need for effectively serving Native students and strengthening tribal self-determination in education.

## Key Recommendations

### Department of Education

Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations Bill

#### **Title I, Part A Local Education Agency Grants**

- *Provide \$25 billion for Title I, Part A.*

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides critical financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high percentages of children from low-income families that ensure all children meet challenging state academic standards. Currently, there are over 600,000 Native students across the country with nearly 93 percent of those students attending non-federal institutions, such as traditional public schools in rural and urban locations. A drastic increase in funding to counter annual inflation and sequestration, as well as to match the amount appropriated under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), is necessary to meet the needs of Native students and students from low-income families.

### Department of Education

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

#### **State-Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) Program**

- *Provide \$5 million for the State-Tribal Education Partnership Program.*

Congress appropriated roughly \$2 million dollars for the STEP program to five participating tribes under the Tribal Education Department appropriations. In order for this program to continue to succeed and thrive, it must receive its own line and authorization of appropriations in FY 2016. Collaboration between tribal education agencies and local and state educational agencies is crucial to develop the tribal capacity to assume the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of Native education departments and to increase tribal self-governance over Native education.

### Department of Education

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

#### **Impact Aid**

- *Provide \$2 billion for Impact Aid, Title VIII funding under the No Child Left Behind Act.*

Impact Aid provides direct payments to public school districts as reimbursement for the loss of traditional property taxes due to a federal presence or activity, including the existence of an Indian reservation. With nearly 93 percent of Native students enrolled in public schools, Impact Aid provides essential funding for schools serving Native students. Funding for Impact Aid must not be less than this requested amount. Furthermore, Impact Aid should be converted to a forward-funded program to eliminate the need for cost transfers and other funding issues at a later date.

## Department of Education

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

### **Title VII (Indian Education Formula Grants)**

- *Provide \$198 million for Title VII funding under the No Child Left Behind Act.*

Current funding for Title VII, Part A decreased by \$6 million to \$124 million under sequestration and has been maintained at that level in Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015. Increases are needed as this critical grant funding is designed to supplement the regular school program and assist Native students so they have the opportunity to achieve the same educational standards and attain parity with their non-Native peers. Furthermore, Title VII funds support early-childhood and family programs, academic enrichment programs, curriculum development, professional development, and culturally-related activities. Currently, funding for Title VII only reaches 500,000 Native students leaving over 100,000 without supplementary academic and cultural programs in their schools. As Native students are far behind their non-Native peers in educational achievement, increased funding is necessary to address this substantial gap.

## Department of Education

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

### **Native Hawaiian Education Program**

- *Provide \$35 million for Title VII, Part B of the No Child Left Behind Act.*

Current funding for Title VII, Part B decreased by \$2 million to \$32 million under sequestration and has been maintained at that level in Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015. Increases are needed as this critical grant program funds the development of curricula and education programs that address the unique needs of Native Hawaiian students to help bring equity to this Native population. The Native Hawaiian Education Program empowers innovative culturally appropriate programs to enhance the quality of education for Native Hawaiians. When establishing the Native Hawaiian Education Program, Congress acknowledged the trust relationship between the Native Hawaiian people and the United States. These programs strengthen the Native Hawaiian culture and improve educational attainment, both of which are correlated with positive economic outcomes.

## Department of Education

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

### **Alaska Native Education Equity Assistance Program**

- *Provide \$35 million for Title VII, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act.*

Current funding for Title VII, Part C decreased by \$2 million to \$31 million under sequestration and has been maintained at that level in Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015. Increases are needed as this assistance program funds the development of curricula and education programs that address the unique educational needs of Alaska Native students, as well as the development and operation of student enrichment programs in science and mathematics. This funding is crucial to closing the gap between Alaska Native students and their non-Native peers. Other eligible activities include professional development for educators, activities carried out through Even Start programs and Head Start programs, family literacy services, and dropout prevention programs.

## Department of Education

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

### Indian Education Language Immersion Grants

- *Provide \$5 million under the creation of Title VII, Part D of the No Child Left Behind Act.*

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 74 Native languages stand to disappear in the next decade, with only 20 Native languages being spoken by 2050. Funding would strengthen tribal sovereignty by amending ESEA Title VII to create a grant program that increases tribal capacity to support Native language immersion schools and provide Native students equal access to learning their cultures and languages. Creating Part D would modernize Title VII of the No Child Left Behind Act to protect the cultural and linguistic heritage of Native students in education systems by providing Native students full-day immersion learning in order to strengthen their language, improve academic outcomes, and become future leaders of their tribes.

## Department of Education

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

### Tribal Colleges and Universities: Supporting Financially Disadvantaged Students

- *Provide \$60 million (\$30 million in discretionary funding and \$30 million in mandatory funding) for Title III-A grants under the Higher Education Act for Tribal Colleges and Universities.*

Titles III and V of the Higher Education Act, known as Aid for Institutional Development programs, support institutions with a large proportion of financially disadvantaged students and low cost-per-student expenditures. Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) clearly fit this definition. The nation's 37 TCUs serve Native and non-Native students in some of the most impoverished areas in the nation. Congress recognized the TCUs as emergent institutions, and, as such, authorized a separate section of Title III (Part A, Sec. 316) specifically to address their needs. Additionally, a separate section (Sec. 317) was created to address similar needs of Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian institutions. Sixty million should be provided (\$30 million discretionary appropriations and \$30 million in mandatory funding under the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act) in FY 2016 to continue to fund grants to these vital institutions.

## Department of Education

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

### Tribal Colleges and Universities: Adult/Basic Education

- *Provide \$8 million for American Indian Adult/Basic Education at Tribal Colleges and Universities, from existing funds appropriated for state block grant funding.*

Despite an absence of dedicated funding, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) must find ways to continue to provide basic adult education classes for those Native students that the present K-12 Indian education system has failed. At TCUs, the number of students in need of remedial education before embarking on their degree programs is substantial. There is a wide-ranging need for basic adult education and literacy programs, and TCUs need adequate funding to support the ever-increasing demand for basic adult education and remediation program services.

## Department of Education

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

### **Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Institutions**

- *Provide \$8.2 million for tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions program funds under the Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act.*

Section 117 of the Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act authorizes funding for operations at tribally-controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions. Vocational education/training programs are very expensive to conduct, but are vital to preparing a future workforce that will operate safely and efficiently, contributing greatly to the global economy. Currently, two TCUs participate in this funding program: United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, North Dakota, and Navajo Technical College in Crownpoint, New Mexico.

## Department of Education

Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations Bill

### **Native American-Serving, Non-Tribal Institutions (Higher Education Act Title III-F)**

- *Provide \$10 million for non-tribal, Native-serving institutions of higher education.*

As the primary federal funding for Native-serving, non-tribal institutions of higher education, the current appropriation of \$5 million is insufficient. With nearly 100 institutions potentially qualifying as Native-serving, non-tribal institutions, this strains the small amount of available funding. Increasing the funding will provide the opportunity for more Native-serving institutions to better serve their students and increase graduation rates among Native students.

### **Shared Responsibility:**

## Department of Education & Department of the Interior

Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill, and Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

Tribal Education Departments

- *Provide \$10 million (\$5 million through the Department of Education and \$5 million through the Department of the Interior) to fund Tribal Education Agencies.*

Five million dollars should be appropriated to the Department of Education, and \$5 million should be appropriated to the Department of the Interior to support tribal education agencies (TEAs). This funding assists TEAs, which are uniquely situated at the local level to implement innovative education programs that improve Native education. Because they are administered by tribes, TEAs are best equipped to deliver education programs tailored to improve education parity for Natives. TEAs would use this much-needed funding to develop academic standards, assess student progress, and create math and science programs that require high academic standards for students in tribal, public, and Bureau of Indian Education schools. Tribes utilizing self-governance over education have been very successful because they better understand the circumstances of their populations and can develop initiatives that meet local needs.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### School Construction and Repair

- *Provide \$263.4 million for Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) school construction and repair.*

This funding category includes school construction, facilities improvement and repair, and replacement school construction. Schools operating within the BIE system are woefully outdated and, in some cases, dangerous for students and staff. Currently more than 60 BIE schools are rated in “poor” condition, which puts Native students at an unfair disadvantage. According to the Department of the Interior, the current backlog of construction projects is estimated to be as high as \$1.3 billion.<sup>39</sup> Students cannot be expected to succeed in environments that are often dilapidated and unsafe. The federal government must uphold its trust responsibility to Native education and fund construction and repair projects.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### Johnson O’Malley Program

- *Provide \$42 million for full funding.*

The Johnson O’Malley (JOM) Program has provided grants to supplement basic student needs since 1934. It is currently being used across the country in innovative ways to assist with the unique cultural and scholastic needs of Native students. The federal government allocated \$96 per student in JOM funding in 1995. Current funding provides less than \$76 per student, which is often the only source through which Native students – including those in public schools – can engage in basic education activities. Some examples of funding needs include essential school supplies and educational programs. Tribal nations request additional funds to increase the current per student allocation to previous levels and prepare for student count increases in future years.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### Student Transportation

- *Provide \$73 million for student transportation in the BIE system.*

BIE schools incur significant costs in transporting Native students to and from school. These costs are considerably higher than most school systems due to the often rural location of BIE facilities. Additionally, the poor road conditions that students, staff, and families must use to access BIE-funded schools increase vehicle maintenance costs. These high costs often lead to funding shortfalls, which then must either go unpaid or be funded by diverting funds from other education programs.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### Tribal Grant Support Costs

- *Provide \$73 million for tribal grant support costs for tribally-operated schools.*

Tribal Grant Support Costs fund the administrative costs of existing tribally-operated schools. FY 2015 funding provided \$62 million for Tribal Grant Support Costs, which is \$14 million above the Presidential request of \$48 million but is still below full funding. Full funding is critical as these funds help tribes expand self-governance and tribal control over education programs by allocating monies for administrative costs such as accounting, payroll, and required legal activities. Otherwise, schools must divert critical teaching and learning funding to cover any shortfalls in operational costs.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### Facilities Operations

- *Provide \$109 million for BIE facilities operations.*

BIE schools use this funding for costs such as electricity, heating fuels, communications, vehicle rentals from the General Services Administration, custodial services, and other operating expenses. For years, schools have only received roughly 50 percent of funding needed for these expenses. This shortfall is unacceptable as costs continue to rise for vital services.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### Facilities Maintenance

- *Provide \$76 million for BIE facilities maintenance.*

BIE schools use this funding for both preventative and routine upkeep, as well as for unscheduled maintenance of school buildings, grounds, and utility systems. Underfunding of maintenance continues to be an issue as buildings are in poor conditions and cannot maintain proper standards.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### Indian School Equalization Program (ISEP)

- *Provide \$431 million for the Indian School Equalization Formula.*

These funds provide the core budget account for BIE elementary and secondary schools by covering salaries for teachers, aides, principals, and other personnel. ISEP funds are often reallocated to cover the program cuts in other areas of education. ISEP must have adequate funding to ensure all program needs are fulfilled and must not be reduced to provide funds for new initiatives that have not been vetted by tribes.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Immersion Demonstration Grants

- *Provide \$3 million for BIE immersion programs.*

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 74 Native languages stand to disappear in the next decade, with only 20 Native languages being spoken by 2050. Funding under the BIE reform efforts should strengthen tribal sovereignty to increase capacity to support Native



language immersion schools and provide Native students equal access to learning their culture and languages. Providing Immersion Demonstration Grant funds would protect the cultural and linguistic heritage of Native students in education systems by providing Native students immersion learning in order to strengthen their language, to improve their academic outcomes, and to support them in becoming future leaders of their tribe.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### Juvenile Detention Education

- *Reinstate \$620,000 for juvenile detention education in BIA-funded facilities.*

These critical funds were eliminated in FY 2012. This essential funding was used to provide educational services to detained and incarcerated youth at 24 BIA-funded juvenile detention facilities. One of the best methods to rehabilitate individuals is through education, and eliminating this program creates additional costs by increasing the rate of criminal recidivism.

## Department of the Interior

### Interior – Environment Appropriations Bill

#### Tribal Colleges and Universities' (TCUs) Institutional Operations

- *Provide \$89.1 million for Titles I, II, and III and the technical assistance contract under the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act.*

**Title I:** To fully fund Title I of the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978 (Tribal College Act), which provides day-to-day operating funds for 27 TCUs, would require \$71.4 million. The education of Native students is a trust responsibility. For many Native students, TCUs are their primary means of receiving a higher education. Accordingly, since the Act was first funded in 1981, the number of TCUs has more than quadrupled and enrollments have increased by more than 325 percent. But despite this increase in student population, TCUs have never received the authorized level of operational funding of \$8,000 per student and are currently receiving only \$6,355 per Indian student. With the possible return of sequestration, this already underfunded but indispensable program faces significant cuts. The more than 30-year federal investment in this proven program will be lost, as some of these institutions may be forced to close their doors. Despite the constraints of the current economy, Congress has an obligation to invest in these critical institutions.

**Title II:** Diné College has a need for \$17 million to operate its campuses on the Navajo Nation in Arizona and New Mexico.

**Title III/Technical Assistance:** \$709,000 is needed to level fund critical technical assistance (which has not been increased since FY 2006) and to assist TCUs in establishing endowments.

Five other TCUs receive operating funds through the Interior Appropriations measure, under separate authorities. To support the day-to-day operating budgets of these TCUs, NCAI requests:

- \$9.3 million for the two tribally-controlled charter career and technical institutions under Title V of the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978;
- \$9.6 million for the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Arts and Culture;

- \$22.9 million for Haskell Indian Nations University in Kansas and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in New Mexico, authorized under the Snyder Act of 1921; and
- \$18 million for a one-time appropriation to provide forward funding for these five TCUs, which are the only education institutions funded through the Interior Appropriations measure that are not forward funded. Forward funding does not increase the federal budget over the long-run. It simply provides necessary funds for vital education program before the start of each academic year, which is critically important when appropriations are delayed and the government is funded under continuing resolutions.

## Department of Agriculture

### Agriculture Appropriations Bill

#### **National Institute for Food and Agriculture 1994 Land-Grant Institutions (TCUs)**

In 1994, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) achieved federal land-grant status through the passage of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act. However, the 34 TCU land-grant institutions are still not recognized or funded as full partners in the nation's land-grant system. Serious inequities exist and as a result, their potential remains unrealized. With anticipated reductions in tribal funding, American Indian and Alaska Native students will inevitably have fewer sources for financial aid. Thus, basic levels of mandated funding to TCUs become that much more important to enable Native people to pursue higher education. Funding for extension programs at the 34 institutions is just 1.5 percent of that appropriated for the 1862 (state) land-grants and 10 percent of that appropriated for the 1890 (18 HBCUs) land grants. In the area of research, the 1994s receive less than one percent of that appropriated for the 1862s and just 3.4 percent appropriated for the 1890s. Appropriations at the requested levels below for each of the 1994 land-grant institution programs, as part of a five-year funding plan, is a small but critical step in addressing disparities that exist in the current land-grant system.

#### **1994 Extension Program**

- *Provide an additional \$6 million for the 1994 Extension Grants Program.*

The 1994 Extension Program is designed to complement, not duplicate, the Federally-Recognized Tribe Extension Program (FRTEP). Ironically, the 1994 Institutions, which are chartered by federally recognized Indian tribes, are the only members of the land-grant system that are prohibited from competing for these grant dollars that are focused on serving federally recognized tribes. The 1994 Extension Program activities include: outreach to at-risk youth; business skills development for local agriculture entrepreneurs; Native plant restoration and horticulture projects; environmental analysis and water quality projects; and nutrition projects aimed at addressing health disparities, such as high rates of diabetes among Native populations. Congress must adequately invest in the extension programs serving reservation communities.

#### **1994 Research Grants**

- *Provide an additional \$3.5 million for the 1994 Research Grants Program.*

The 1994 Research Grants Program allows TCUs to partner with other land-grant institutions in research areas such as agriculture marketing, renewable energy, nutrition and health, Native plants and horticulture, water quality, and land management. These research areas are of increasing importance as tribal economic development and other tribal efforts to address pressing challenges depend on access to quality data and

evidence. These challenges include the disproportionate impacts of climate change on tribal lands and people, as well as the impact of poor economic conditions. TCUs need and deserve a level of funding that will increase their capacity for further developing and conducting research and for strengthening education and sustainable economic development important to their tribal communities.

### **1994 Educational Equity Grant Program**

- *Provide an additional \$3.5 million in Educational Equity Grant Program funding for the 1994 land-grant institutions.*

The Education Equity Grant Program assists TCU land-grant institutions to establish academic programs within the field of agriculture that explore areas such as natural resource management, nutrition, environmental science, horticulture, sustainable development, and forestry. The funding requested will help in preparing to address issues of climate change and its impact on agriculture, ecosystems, and natural resources focusing on remote reservation communities. Additionally, this investment will support TCU efforts to provide increased nutrition education to their reservation communities, which experience diabetes and other health issues at rates far greater than the national average.

### **1994 Native American Institutions Endowment Fund**

- *Provide an additional \$136 million payment into the corpus of the 1994 Institutions Native American Endowment Fund.*

The Native American Institutions Endowment Fund, housed and administered by the US Treasury, provides funds to TCU land-grant institutions through dissemination of the annual interest yield. Although Congress has made regular contributions to the corpus of the endowment, the latest interest yield shared by the 34 eligible 1994 institutions amounts to just \$4.9 million. This amount is less the four percent fee the USDA takes off the top, which amounts to a share greater than that received by three-quarters of the TCUs. These funds assist in strengthening academic programs, including agriculture curricula development, faculty development, instructional delivery, and experiential learning. Funds are also used to enhance student recruitment and retention in the agricultural sciences, as well as to address the ongoing need for improved facilities at the 1994 land-grant institutions. The 1994 institutions request that a payment of \$136 million be made, which would essentially double the principle amount funded for the 1994 Native American Institutions Endowment. Since only the annual interest yield is distributed to the 1994 land-grant institutions, it is the interest on the Fund - and not the appropriated payment amount - that is scored as budget outlay. The additional interest available to the TCUs will yield dividends in community-based programs.

### **Rural Development: Essential Community Facilities at Tribal Colleges and Universities Grant Program**

- *Provide \$10 million for the TCU Essential Community Facilities Grant Program.*

The USDA-Rural Development program provides grants for Essential Community Facilities at TCUs and funds the ever-growing need for construction, improvement, and maintenance of TCU facilities, such as advanced science laboratories, computer labs, student/faculty housing, day care centers, and community service facilities. Although the situation has improved at many TCUs over the past several years, some institutions still operate partially in temporary and inadequate buildings. Few TCUs have dormitories, even fewer have student health centers, and only a handful of TCUs have full research laboratories. The 1994 land-grant institutions need a commitment of \$10 million each year for the next five fiscal years to support construction, improvement, and maintenance of their facilities.

## Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

### Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill

#### HUD-University Partnership Program for Tribal Colleges and Universities

- *Provide \$5.5 million to the HUD-University Partnership Program for Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs).*

Executive Order 13592, "Improving American Indian and Alaska Native Educational Opportunities and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities," holds federal agencies accountable for developing plans to integrate TCUs into their programs. TCUs work with tribes and communities to address all aspects of reservation life, including the continuum of education, housing, economic development, health promotion, law enforcement training, and crime prevention. Likewise, federal agencies need to work with TCUs. To achieve results, Congress needs to hold the Administration accountable for strengthening the TCUs, including their physical plants, and for routinely including TCUs as full partners in all existing and potential federal higher education programs. The HUD-TCU competitive grants program, administered by the Office of University Partnerships, is an excellent place to start. This competitive grants program has enabled TCUs to expand their roles and efficacy in addressing development and revitalization needs within their respective communities.

## Department of Health and Human Services

### Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

#### Head Start

- *Provide \$9.6 billion in total funding for Head Start, which includes Indian Head Start.*

Head Start continues to play an instrumental role in Native education. Head Start funds provide early education to over 24,000 Native children. This vital program combines education, health, and family services to model traditional Native education, which accounts for its success rate. However, as inflation and fiscal constraints increase, current funding dollars provide less for Native populations. It is now conventional wisdom that there is a return of at least \$7 for every single dollar invested in Head Start.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, Congress should increase funds to Head Start and Early Head Start to ensure Indian Head Start can reach more tribal communities and help more Native people by triggering the Indian special expansion funding provisions (after a full Cost of Living Allowance has been paid to all Head Start programs). The definition of "expansion" for funding purposes should include not only new positions, but also the establishment of new programs in underserved Indian communities, as well as quality improvements (e.g., increased staffing, professional development, transportation equipment, computer technology/web access, facility renovations and repair, etc.). Expansion should also include lengthening programs from part-day to full-day, enabling a shift from home-based to center-based programs, providing full year services, and supporting even earlier resources through Early Head Start.

## Department of Health and Human Services

### Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill

#### Native Languages Preservation (Esther Martinez Program Grants)

- *Provide \$12 million for Native language preservation, with \$5 million designated to fund the Esther Martinez Language programs.*

Native language grant programs are essential to revitalizing Native languages and cultures, many of which are at risk of disappearing in the next decade. With adequate funding, Esther Martinez Program Grants support and strengthen Native American language immersion programs. In addition to protecting Native languages, these immersion programs have been shown to promote higher academic success for participating students in comparison to their Native peers who do not participate. The federal budget should include \$12 million as part of the appropriation to the Administration for Native Americans for Native language preservation activities. The appropriation should also include \$5 million designated to support the Esther Martinez Language Programs' Native language immersion initiatives, as they have demonstrated success in strengthening Native language revitalization.

## **National Science Foundation (NSF)**

Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Bill

### **Education and Human Resources (EHR)**

- *Provide at least \$13.3 million to the Tribal Colleges and Universities Program.*

In FY 2009, the National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded \$4.2 billion in science and engineering (SE) funding to the nation's institutions of higher education, and TCUs only received \$10.5 million, or one-quarter of one percent of this funding. Among other minority serving institutions, NSF awarded \$144.2 million in SE funding to 174 historically black colleges and universities and Hispanic serving institutions, averaging \$828,545 per institution, while 29 TCUs received an average of only \$362,000 per institution. This disproportionate distribution must be addressed in FY 2016.