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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6450

ALLISON BINNEY, MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR
DAVID A. MULLON JR., MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

November 17, 2009

Dear Tribal Leader:

As the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs begins developing its agenda for 2010, I write to ask you to submit your observations and thoughts about the services provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Indian Health Service (IHS). I would like to hear from you about services provided by these agencies at the national, regional, and local levels to your tribal government and your tribal constituency.

As a part of our oversight responsibilities we hope you will provide details about programs and services that are working well, those that need improvement, and if you believe improvements are needed, your ideas on how to reform the services provided or programs delivered by the BIA and IHS. For example, one area of needed improvement that has been brought to the Committee's attention is non-operating or understaffed facilities in Indian country. Facilities are built by one Federal agency but are unused because another agency does not provide funding for the use of the facility. A positive example of a program that is making a difference shared with the Committee by tribal leaders is the improvements to tribal economic development achieved through the Indian Loan Guarantee Program.

Any information submitted will only be used to assist the Committee in conducting its oversight functions. The information will also help Members of the Committee gain a better understanding of the needs of Indian country.

I look forward to working with you to improve the services provided to tribal governments and tribal members, and in meeting the Federal Government's solemn treaty and trust obligations to all Indian tribes. Please submit any comments to comments@indian.senate.gov or send via facsimile (202) 228-2589. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,



Byron L. Dorgan
Chairman