

Testimony of Louis Taylor
Chairman, Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
Hearing Regarding Nomination of David Anderson to Serve as
Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior
October 22, 2003

Ladies and Gentlemen:

My name is Louis Taylor. I am the Tribal Chairman of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians. Accompanying me is Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Vice-Chairman, Russell Barber, and Mr. Alfred Trepania. Mr. Trepania serves as President of the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council. The Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council is an organization comprised of 11 Member Tribes of which Lac Courte Oreilles is a Member. The organization's purpose is to assist its Member Tribes with preserving tribal sovereignty and achieving self-sufficiency and self-determination. Mr. Trepania is also a Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Member and a former Tribal Chairman.

The Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe is located in Northwestern Wisconsin near the Town of Hayward in Sawyer County. Our Reservation is comprised of approximately 74,000 acres with the Tribal Membership at 5,531. Lac Courte Oreilles has the third largest membership of the 11 Tribes in Wisconsin.

Some of the services the Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe provides its community include a Head Start Program, K-12 School System, Community College, Road Construction and Maintenance, Fire Department, EMT Service, Social Services, Emergency Shelter, Halfway House, Public Radio Station, Medical Services, Elderly Nutrition Sites, and Youth Centers.

Additionally, the Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe owns and operates a Cranberry Marsh, Grocery Store, Gas Station, Resort, Construction Company, Casino, and Credit Union.

Although we have made some great accomplishments in recent years, largely due to a modest gaming establishment, there are still areas of significant need on the reservation. The family per capita income on the reservation in 1999 equaled \$24,600 per year with the Tribe's seasonably adjusted unemployment rate at 20%. With over 20% of the children on the reservation living in poverty, there is still plenty to do and we are constantly looking for new areas of economic development.

Contrary to popular belief, our Tribe and many other Tribes do not distribute per capita payments to its members as we are almost always operating with a budget deficit and rely on grant monies in order to provide basic services and jobs for our tribal members. Even with our ongoing challenges, there has been steady growth at Lac Courte Oreilles and we will continue our efforts for the benefit of our tribal members and generations to come.

The Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Governing Board is the governing body of the Band and I, as Chairman, am pleased that Mr. David Anderson has been nominated by President Bush to serve as the U.S. Department of Interior's Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. I am extremely proud that a Tribal Member of Lac Courte Oreilles has been nominated to serve the Tribal Governments and the United States in this important position.

I am honored to be here today and would like to thank Chairman Ben Nighthorse Campbell and the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs for the invitation to speak.