



February 13, 2019

Honorable John Hoeven, Chairman
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
SH-838 Hart Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Tom Udall, Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
SH-838 Hart Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Indian Country Support for Indian Economic Development & Business Incubators

Dear Chairman Hoeven and Vice Chairman Udall:

We the undersigned organizations, representing the interests of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments and business enterprises throughout the United States, thank you for your prompt action to reintroduce and move through your Committee two important bills to promote entrepreneurship, job creation, business incubation, and economic development of tribal economies: S. 212, the Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act; and S. 294, the Native American Business Incubators Program Act. We anxiously await Senate passage of both bills.

We applaud your efforts, and urge other Senators to join in co-sponsoring this key legislation designed to make several long-sought federal programmatic changes to promote tribal economic development, most notably by: (1) elevating the Office of Native American Business Development to report directly to the Secretary of Commerce; (2) expanding the Buy Indian Act; (3) reauthorizing and expanding economic development initiatives supported by the Native American Programs Act; (4) directing agencies to work together to promote private investment in Indian Country and update securities regulations so tribes can qualify as accredited investors that could access the \$1 trillion market for debt and equity securities; and (5) establishing a Native American Business Incubators Program to support job growth and tribal economic development by promoting entrepreneurship in tribal communities through business incubators with workspace and related resources to meet the unique needs of Native entrepreneurs starting and growing businesses in Indian Country.

These long-sought initiatives enjoy broad support in Indian Country. Our organizations have endorsed these bills in resolutions, joint letters, and testimony for at least two Senate hearings and two House hearings held on this legislation. Given the hearings and markups already taken, we ask that the Committee report these bills to the full Senate for approval as soon as possible so that they can move to the House for consideration. Prompt enactment of this legislation would facilitate greater access to capital, create economic development opportunities, enhance procurement and other business assistance for tribal and other Native enterprises throughout the United States, and encourage greater indigenous trade through collaborative initiatives of the Departments of Commerce and Interior, among others.



Thank you for your prompt attention and for working collaboratively with our organizations to advance business and economic development in Indian Country.

Respectfully,

Chris James
President & CEO
National Center for American
Enterprise Development

Jefferson Keel
President
National Congress of
American Indians

President
Native American Contractors
Association

Dante Desiderio
Executive Director
Native American Finance
Officers Association

Hallie L. Bissett
Executive Director
Alaska Native Village
Corporation Association

Sarah Echohawk
Chief Executive Officer
American Indian Science &
Engineering Society

Jason Giles
Executive Director
National Indian Gaming
Association

Kitcki Carroll
Executive Director
United South and
Eastern Tribes

Chief Kirk Francis
President
United South and
Eastern Tribes

Pete Upton
Chairman
Native CDFI Network