

July 16: USET SPF Alert: USCCR Hearing on Broken Promises and COVID, USET SPF to Testify  
Dear USET SPF Board of Directors and DC Tribal Reps,

Tomorrow, July 17<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 am ET, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) will be hosting a [virtual public briefing](#) [information linked] entitled, *COVID-19 in Indian Country: The Impact of Federal Broken Promises on Native Americans*. During the briefing, USCCR will hear from a panel of Tribal leaders and experts on the ways in which the federal government's chronic failure to uphold its fiduciary trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations has exacerbated the COVID-19 public health emergency in Indian Country. USET SPF Secretary, Chief Lynn Malerba, will [testify](#) [written testimony linked] on behalf of our organization, along with representatives from many of our partner organizations, including NCAI, NIHB, and NCUIH.

At the request of Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Rep. Deb Haaland (D-NM), USCCR plans to update its [2018 Broken Promises report](#) [linked], which found that with the exception of some minor improvements, the U.S. continues to neglect to meet its "most basic" obligations to Tribal Nations. As USET SPF has consistently [advocated](#) [Congressional testimony linked], though these chronic failures have persisted throughout changes in Administration and Congress, it is time that both the legislative and executive branches confront and correct them. The updated report will include information related to the COVID-19 emergency and its impacts on Indian Country. It is currently expected to be issued in January 2021.

In addition to testimony during the public briefing, USCCR is also seeking public comment to inform the preparation of the report. USCCR provides a set of [six framing questions](#) [notice linked] to be addressed in comments. [The comment deadline is Friday, July 24<sup>th</sup>](#), and this information can be submitted to [BrokenPromises@usCCR.gov](mailto:BrokenPromises@usCCR.gov). We encourage our member Tribal Nations to consider the submission of comments.

USET SPF will continue to seek bold, systemic changes in response to the federal government's chronic neglect of its obligations to Indian Country. The circumstances that Tribal Nations face during this public health emergency are directly attributable to the federal government's centuries of dishonorable action and inaction in its relationship with us. At a time when Americans are finally coming to realize the urgent need for our country to reconcile with its past, it should begin by atoning for its original sins against this land's first peoples.

We will be provide further information and updates as they become available.

Thank you,  
Liz Malerba ~ *Citizen of the Mohegan Tribe*  
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