



July 1, 2026

Honorable Jeff Hurd, Chair
 Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs
 House Committee on Natural Resources
 Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Teresa Leger Fernández, Ranking Member
 Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs
 House Committee on Natural Resources
 Washington, DC 20515

RE: Request Prompt Action to Reauthorize Two Key Economic Development Grant Programs

Dear Chairman Hurd and Ranking Member Leger Fernández:

We, the undersigned national Native organizations representing and serving hundreds of Tribal Nations across the country, hereby **request that you introduce or add to existing legislation and promptly move to reauthorize two key federal programs that have worked well in furthering economic development in Indian Country: (1) the Social and Economic Development Strategies (SEDS) and SEDS-Alaska (SEDS-AK) Programs; and (2) the Indian Business Incubator Program.**

In 2020, the Congress reauthorized the SEDS and SEDS-AK grant programs, strengthening and prioritizing them through the Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act (Public Law 116-261). A simple reauthorization of these grant programs will ensure that the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) continues to issue SEDS and SEDS-AK grants that effectively implement social and economic development strategies designed and self-determined by the Native communities themselves. SEDS-based grants' uniqueness lies in their flexibility to allow Tribal Nations and Native organizations to define priorities and design projects based on locally identified needs. For over three decades, these transformative programs appropriately place primary emphasis, as noted by ANA, on (1) supporting Indian Country's self-determined "development of stable, diversified local economies that provide jobs and business opportunities, promoting economic well-being in Native American communities"; and (2) enhancing the governance and administrative infrastructure and capacity of Tribal Nations, Native organizations, and Alaska Native village governments "to develop and enforce laws, regulations, codes, and policies that benefit" those communities and advance their building of those economies. In sum, these grants provide a critical mechanism for the federal government to meet its trust and treaty obligations.

Also in 2020, Congress authorized a program responsive to decades-long calls from Indian Country for federal assistance to help Tribal Nations form and grow economic enterprises. Public Law 116-174, as implemented by the Department of the Interior, established the Indian Business Incubator Program. Interior solicited and awarded what was planned as a first round of grants to support incubators operated by Tribes, Tribal colleges or universities, higher education institutions, or nonprofit organizations that focus on helping Tribes and Native entrepreneurs establish and grow Native-owned businesses. These business incubators provide professional networking opportunities and assistance developing business plans and attracting outside investors. These incubators provide facilities and resources to help close gaps that have left Tribal- and Native-owned businesses behind, including access to high-speed internet and business training to navigate procurement requirements and regulations at all levels.

Reauthorization of the SEDS and Indian Business Incubator Programs enjoys broad support in Indian Country. Whether included in a new bill, or added by amendment to another measure, such as Chairman Hurd’s bill considered in the Subcommittee’s recent hearing on June 9, H.R. 8954, these reauthorizations will further essential Tribal economic development goals. Therefore, we urge the Subcommittee to take the following actions promptly:

- Amend Section 816 of the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 2992d) in subsection (a) by striking “2021 through 2025” and inserting “2026 through 2030”; and
- Amend Section 8 of the Native American Business Incubator Program Act of 2020 (25 U.S.C. 5807) by striking “2020 through 2024” and inserting “2026 through 2030”; or

With enactment of these authorities, and their immediate agency implementation, the federal government will facilitate substantial improvement in economic and business development and investment opportunities advocated by Indian Country for many decades.

We stand ready to work with you to achieve these goals and thank you for their immediate consideration.

Sincerely,

Amber Schulz-Oliver
Executive Director
**Affiliated Tribes of Northwest
Indians (ATNI)**

Cory M. Blankenship
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