



"A Tradition of Native American Housing"

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The National American Indian Housing Council is a not-for-profit organization representing tribes and tribal housing organizations on affordable housing, mortgage lending, finance, and economic development issues.

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The Federal Monitor

News of Issues Affecting Tribes and Tribal Housing Programs

Congress Set to Clear CR Through Nov. 20

The House of Representatives will vote today on a continuing resolution (CR) that would fund non-defense agencies at fiscal year 2004 levels through November 20. The Senate is expected to clear the measure before the beginning of the new fiscal year on Friday. Earlier in the week it looked like a shorter CR, through October 8, would be considered, but top appropriators have admitted what has become increasingly apparent – that Congress will not finish all 13 FY 2005 appropriations bills before the November election, which is now less than five weeks away. The CR is needed to keep those agencies and departments without approved FY 2005 funding from shutting down on October 1. To date, only appropriations for defense have been signed into law by the President. House appropriations Chairman C.W. Bill Young (R-FL) expects to have an omnibus appropriations measure for all unfinished spending ready to pass in a post-election lame duck session in November. For now, Congress is on track to recess for the election on October 8.

Senate Committee Approves Alaska Housing and Capital Formation Bills

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs today approved a bill to provide habitable living quarters for teachers, administrators, other school staff, and their households in rural areas of Alaska located in or near Alaska Native Villages. **The Rural Teacher Housing Act (S. 1905)**, sponsored by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and co-sponsored by Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-CO), would require the Secretary of HUD to provide funds to the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation to make grants or loans to school districts within qualified communities. For more information, search S.1905 at <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

Also approved by the Committee is **S.519, the Native American Capital Formation and Economic Development Act of 2003**. At a hearing held on the bill in late July, NAIHC Chairman Chester Carl testified that technical assistance and mentoring was key in the effort to help tribes with economic development by building "business sense". The purposes of the Act are: (1) to establish a corporation dedicated to capital development and economic growth policies in Native American communities; (2) to provide the necessary resources of the United States, Native Americans, and the private sector on endemic problems such as fractionated and unproductive Indian land; (3) to provide a center for economic development policy and analysis with particular emphasis on diagnosing the systemic weaknesses with, and inhibitors to greater levels of investment in, Native American economies; (4) to establish a Native-owned financial entity to provide financial services to Indian tribes, Native American organizations, and Native Americans; and (5) to improve the material standard of living of Native Americans. The corporation formed would be subject to the regulatory authority of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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NAIHC Co-Chairs Housing Leadership Forum

Tribal leaders from around the country were invited last week to a Senate Democratic Native American Leadership Forum, *Strengthening the Bonds: Empowering Indian Country through Continuing Dialogue*, with an ultimate goal of developing a list of tribal priorities for the 109th Congress. The Forum was hosted by Senate Democratic Leader, Tom Daschle (D-SD), and the Chair of the Senate Democratic Steering and Coordination Committee, Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY). After a welcome and overview from Senators Daschle and Clinton, the group broke into five different workgroups to begin formulating a list of priorities for each area. Each workgroup expects to meet periodically by conference call over the next several months to develop final policy recommendations to be ready for the opening of the 109th Congress in January.

NAIHC's Government Affairs Director, Kristy McCarthy Weight, was asked by the Democratic Steering Committee to co-chair the Housing, Infrastructure & Economic Opportunity policy workgroup with Senator Tim Johnson's (D-SD) Legislative Assistant, Danna Jackson. Senator Johnson opened the workgroup discussion, emphasizing the need to pass important legislation in each of the three areas of housing, infrastructure, and economic development. Workgroup participants, including NAIHC Chairman Chester Carl, discussed such issues as the Small Business Administration reauthorization, strengthening the Indian public radio system, need for parity for tribes in the tax code, and assembling business advisory groups in tribal areas. Specific to housing were the need to address problems with Section 184 and Title VI Loan Guarantees, predatory lending, title recordation, leveraging through CDFI's, downpayment assistance, and the impact of mixed-race Census data. Other NAIHC Board members who were in attendance offered that another issue needing to be addressed is allowing for subsidy for NAHASDA-assisted units in the IHBG, an issue that couldn't be touched by the formula negotiated rulemaking committee because it is statutory.

The workgroup co-chairs plan to compile notes and hold the first conference call in mid-October.

Infrastructure Task Force to Meet October 7

The inter-tribal, inter-agency Infrastructure Task Force is scheduled to hold its next meeting on October 7 in Washington, D.C. The main item on the meeting agenda will be working on the inter-agency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the purpose of which is to better coordinate the federal government's efforts in the delivery of infrastructure services and financial assistance in Indian country in support of tribal communities. In attendance will be representatives of HUD, USDA, BIA, IHS, EPA, and the Commerce Department. The meeting will be held in Room 5140 at the U.S. Department of Agriculture from 2 pm to 4 pm eastern. Those who wish to dial in should **call 800-416-8128, code 898881**.

Legal Symposium December 7 – 10 in Las Vegas

NAIHC's annual Legal Symposium is fast approaching! Brochures for the meeting will be mailed next week, but in the meantime you can find information for the meeting online at www.naihc.net. Online registration has been activated, so register today! Also, be sure to secure your hotel room early. As in past years, the Legal Symposium is the same week as the National Finals Rodeo and rooms get taken fast. Call 800-499-6311 for reservations at the Mirage to secure the conference rate of \$90.00 per night plus tax before November 15.