

**Immediate Action Needed To Restore Indian Roads Funding** – On Thursday, July 12, the Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee and Appropriations Committee will consider its FY 2002 Transportation Appropriations bill. As passed by the House, the bill (H.R. 2299, H.Rept. 107-108) would cut funding for the Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) program by approximately \$25 million. Tribal leaders are urged to immediately contact members of the Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, especially Chairwoman Murray (D-WA) to urge that this funding be restored in the Senate mark.

The House-passed version of H.R. 2299 would appropriate nearly \$49.1 billion in discretionary funds for DOT programs, which is \$1.2 billion greater than the FY 2001 enacted level and \$110 million more than the President's request. Within this total, approximately \$241 million would be provided to the IRR. This amount is comprised of \$275 million in authorized funds, minus approximately \$34 million due to the obligation limit and \$4.1 million for administrative costs.

For FY 2001, Congress added \$25 million to the IRR, which brought its total funding level to approximately \$262.3 million. During the debate on the FY 2001 Transportation Appropriations bill, tribal leaders and Congressional supporters such as Senators Domenici (R-NM), Campbell (R-CO), and Bingaman (D-NM) were successful in securing approximately \$271 million for the IRR in the Senate-passed bill. However, this funding level was reduced to the House-passed level during final negotiations on the bill.

A list of Subcommittee members follows, and a sample letter is attached.

Member	Fax Number
Patty Murray (Chair)	202-224-0238
Robert Byrd	202-228-0002
Barbara Mikulski	202-224-8858
Harry Reid	202-224-7327
Herb Kohl	202-224-9787
Richard Durbin	202-228-0400
Richard Shelby (Ranking Member)	202-224-3416
Arlen Specter	202-228-1229
Christopher Bond	202-224-8149
Robert Bennett	202-224-4908
Ben Nighthorse Campbell	202-224-5429
Kay Bailey Hutchison	202-224-0776

SAMPLE LETTER  
SENATE TRANSPORTATION APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

[Date]

The Honorable [First and Last Name]  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator [Last Name]:

I am writing on behalf of [name of tribe] to urge your support in reversing the House-passed cut of \$25 million to Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) program in the FY 2002 Transportation Appropriations bill.

Tribal governments rely on IRR funding to supply the resources needed to construct and maintain the public roads that provide access to and within Indian reservations, Indian trust lands, restricted Indian lands, and Alaska Native villages.

IRR roads make up 2.63 percent of all existing roads in the federal-aid highway system, but historically they have received less than one percent of all federal highway dollars. On average, only \$500 per mile – and in some cases, as little as \$80 per mile – is available for maintenance. In comparison, an average of \$2,200 per mile is spent maintaining other federal roads, and an average of \$2,500 to \$4,000 per mile is spent by states.

As a direct result of this low funding level, many of our roads cannot be sufficiently maintained and must be shut down during the winter months or in rainy weather. This type of unreliable transportation infrastructure hurts our ability to attract businesses, provide emergency services, and bus our children safely to school.

The House-passed FY 2002 Transportation Appropriations bill would fund the IRR program at approximately \$241 million – a \$25 million cut from the FY 2001 enacted level. This amount is comprised of \$275 million in authorized funds, less approximately \$34 million due to the obligation limit and \$4.1 million for administrative costs.

Recognizing the urgent need to improve the condition of roads in Indian Country, the Senate last year approved a FY 2001 Transportation Appropriations bill that would have allocated approximately \$271 million to the IRR program by providing it with additional Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA) funds. However, this funding level was reduced to the House-passed level of \$262.3 million during conference negotiations.

I strongly urge the Subcommittee to again take a leadership role in advocating for IRR program funding during the FY 2002 Transportation appropriations process. This can be achieved by funding IRR at its authorized level of \$275 million.

Thank you for your consideration and for your past support for the IRR program.