



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

June 1, 2007

Laura Rogers, Director  
SMART Office, U.S. Department of Justice  
810 7th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20531

Dear Ms. Rogers:

I am writing on behalf of the National Congress of American Indians, the nation's oldest and largest organization of tribal governments, with regard to the anticipated grant funding for the Adam Walsh Act. I was very pleased to see that the Attorney General has allocated funds to assist jurisdictions to come into compliance with the new requirements for sex offender monitoring, and I understand that you are currently in the process of determining what form the grant solicitation, or solicitations, will take. Given the unique situation of Indian tribes, I urge you to develop a separate solicitation for tribal governments.

The tribal governments represented by NCAI share the federal government's commitment to protecting our communities and citizens from sexual predators, and we are eager to do our part. As you know, however, the Adam Walsh Act marks the first time that tribes are included in the national sex offender registration and monitoring system. Because of this, many tribes will be building sex offender registration systems from the ground up and will likely have a greater demand for resources, support, and technical assistance than jurisdictions with existing registration and monitoring systems in place.

In addition, as tribes develop initial capacity, they will be ill-prepared to compete with more sophisticated applicants in a competitive grant process. Tribal governments, who too often operate on a shoe-string budget, frequently do not have access to professional grant writers. Many other federal grant programs to tribal governments have addressed this issue by providing technical assistance to tribes in the grant application process and ensuring that any review process include individuals with experience working with Indian communities. I strongly encourage you to do the same.

As you establish grant programs under the Adam Walsh Act, it is imperative that they be designed in way that is reflective of the unique needs and circumstances of tribal nations. If I or my staff can be of any assistance to you as you move forward, please contact myself or Virginia Davis, 202-466-7767 or [vdavis@ncai.org](mailto:vdavis@ncai.org). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Joe Garcia, President

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