



HOMELAND SECURITY & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Department of Homeland Security outreach and communication has vastly improved due to the consistent presence of tribal affairs points of contact. Funding has stagnated at a critical level for the past 10 years, which places Indian Country and the totality of the United States at risk until tribes achieve greater capacity equal to the states for homeland security and emergency management purposes. Congress and the Administration have a trust obligation to assist tribal governments to protect all citizens, Native and non-Native, within their jurisdictions. Tribal officials accept their responsibilities to do the best they can with underfunded homeland security budgets, or no budgets whatsoever. Until parity occurs, tribal communities will be unable to participate in the national homeland security strategies and will continue to be a weak link in protecting vital infrastructure from domestic and international terrorist attacks, and related threats.

Key Recommendations

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)

Homeland Security Appropriations Bill

Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program

- *Provide \$20 million annually in additional funding for tribal direct grants for the next five years.*

The Department of Homeland Security has responded to tribal officials needs by keeping Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP) separate from a state-competitive omnibus grant program approach. Unmet tribal homeland security needs are significant, and every year tribes request more than the program is authorized to fund. Several tribes could utilize the entire amount budget for THSGP. NCAI strongly urges the Congress to fund THSGP at \$20 million for the next five years. This would represent a significant increase over the \$10 million that DHS has made available for tribal grants in recent years.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Homeland Security Appropriations Bill

Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative

- Provide \$10 million to enable tribal governments to work cooperatively with DHS in developing tribal identification cards.
- Provide technical assistance and materials for tribes to produce tribal IDs.

Tribal governments are faced with the costly, unfunded mandate to comply with the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative for enhanced tribal identification (ID) cards. Funding for tribal ID cards will enable tribal government officials to continue to cross borders in accordance with longstanding treaty rights and agreements and enter into federal offices where they regularly conduct business. Some tribes have the human resource and logistical capacity to produce tribal IDs if materials and technical assistance were available. DHS should reach out to tribes to assist them if requested.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)

Homeland Security Appropriations Bill

Federal Emergency Management Agency

- Provide \$500,000 for the creation and operation of a National Tribal Advisory Council.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) supports the National Advisory Council (NAC), which was established by the enactment of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 to ensure effective and ongoing coordination of Federal preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation for natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other manmade disasters. The NAC advises the FEMA Administrator on all aspects of emergency management. The authorizing statute requires participation from tribal government experts, but FEMA limits participation to two tribal representatives. Tribes are greatly concerned about the ability of the current NAC to adequately represent tribal perspectives as FEMA appointed a state employee to serve in one of the tribal representative slots although several tribal officials applied for the positions. To ensure that diverse tribal needs are adequately represented, FEMA should set up a National Tribal Advisory Council (Tribal NAC). This is particularly important as FEMA implements the new authorities created for tribal governments in the Stafford Act. Congress should provide \$500,000 for the creation and operation of a Tribal NAC.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)

Homeland Security Appropriations Bill

Federal Emergency Management Agency, Emergency Management Institute

- Provide \$1 million for tribal government emergency management training.

More tribes have developed and enhanced emergency management capability. The Federal Emergency Management Agency is scheduled to release the final draft of the Stafford Act tribal disaster declaration guidance early in 2016. Tribes will need additional training for all departmental staff. The FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI) has developed several training courses for tribal officials toward enhanced tribal government emergency management capacity. The current EMI budget restricts delivery of the courses at EMI and in the field. NCAI urges the Congress to provide FEMA with budget support for delivery of tribal emergency management courses. Specifically, we request that \$1 million be included for tribal government emergency management training.