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**National Indian Organizations Testify Before U.S. House Subcommittee  
on Reauthorization of the Native American Housing  
Assistance and Self-Determination Act**

WASHINGTON—June 7, 2007—In joint testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, the National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC) and the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) pushed for timely reauthorization of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA).

“It is critical that we protect the nearly \$6 billion dollar investment the Federal government has made towards Indian housing over the past decade through NAHASDA,” said Cheryl Parish, Executive Director of the Bay Mills Indian Community Housing Authority and Vice-Chairwoman of NAIHC. “NAIHC’s member tribes and tribally designated housing entities (TDHEs) appreciate the willingness and support of this Committee to focus on, and to understand, what the law means to Indian Country—providing desperately needed tools so we can continue to improve the housing conditions that our people face every day.”

Parish said NAIHC member tribes have not experienced the flexibility they need in running their housing programs and encouraged the committee to consider amendments from NAIHC and NCAI that will increase and enhance their flexibility.

“NAHASDA revolutionized how Native American housing funds are provided by recognizing tribes’ authority to make their own business decisions,” said NCAI Executive Director Jacqueline Johnson. “Tribes have increased capacity to address the disturbing housing and infrastructure conditions in Indian Country through developing and managing their own programs and in many cases leveraging NAHASDA dollars with tribal dollars.”

Parish and Johnson reiterated to the committee the importance of Indian Self-Determination which, at its core, means tribes knowing the needs of their people and the best ways to serve those needs.

Other panelists at hearing included Orlando J. Cabrera, Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for Public and Indian Housing; Sami Jo Difuntorum, Executive Director, Karuk Tribe Housing Authority; Aneva J. Yazzie, CEO, Navajo Housing Authority; Wendsler Nosie Sr., Chairman, San Carlos Apache Tribe; and Mark Chino, President, Mescalero Apache Tribe.

All panelists agreed upon the need to strike a balance between flexibility and accountability. Infrastructure needs are paramount and more funding is needed if tribes are to truly achieve their self-determined goals of safe, decent and affordable housing.

See [www.naihc.net](http://www.naihc.net) for testimony, recommendations and photos

*The National American Indian Housing Council assists tribes and tribal housing entities in reaching their self-determined goals of providing culturally relevant, decent, safe, sanitary, and quality affordable housing for Native people in Indian communities and Alaska Native villages.  
"A Tradition of Native American Housing"*

*Founded in 1944, the National Congress of American Indians is the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization in the country. NCAI advocates on behalf of tribal governments, promoting strong tribal-federal government-to-government policies, and promoting a better understanding among the general public regarding American Indian and Alaska Native governments, people and rights.*