



# The Federal Monitor

*News of Issues Affecting Tribes and Tribal Housing Programs*

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## **National American Indian Housing Council**

NAIHC, a not-for-profit organization, assists tribes and tribal housing entities in reaching their goal of providing culturally relevant, decent, safe, sanitary and quality affordable housing for Native people in Indian communities, Alaska Native Villages and Hawaiian Home Lands.

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## **INDIAN COUNTRY NEEDS NAHASDA PASSED NOW**

The long August recess is over. Indian Country still awaits reauthorization of its major housing law – the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA). Less than three weeks remain in this year's Congressional calendar due to the Presidential election.

NAIHC has worked diligently for two years to get this major legislation enacted into law and in the remaining weeks of the 110th Congress will continue to work on the outstanding issues that stand in the way of the reauthorization.

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

Indian housing should not be held up any longer by these outstanding issues. Urge your Representative and Senators to resolve them today. Please see the attached letter for your consideration and contact your Members of Congress today. You may also download the letter at [www.naihc.net](http://www.naihc.net).

### **KEY CHANGES IN NAHASDA**

Both the Senate (S.2062) and the House of Representatives (H.R. 2786) have introduced innovative legislation to reauthorize NAHASDA – the “Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2007.” Both bills will amend NAHASDA to enhance tribal capacity to address the substandard housing and infrastructure conditions in Indian country by encouraging greater self-management of housing programs and greater leveraging of scarce Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) dollars.

Additional changes include:

- Establishes a new “Subtitle B – Self-Determined Housing Activities for Tribal Communities” to “provide Indian tribes with flexibility” in the use of block grant funds “in manners that are wholly self-determined by the Indian tribe for housing activities involving construction, acquisition, rehabilitation, or infrastructure.”
- Exempts purchases of goods and services less than \$5,000 from the procurement rules.
- Adds utilities, infrastructure and mold remediation as allowable activities.
- Authorizes tribes to establish reserve accounts to accumulate funds for purposes of administration and planning related to affordable housing activities.

***Thank you for your ongoing support and advocacy.***

Draft Letter from Indian Tribes to Members of Congress

(TRIBAL LETTERHEAD)

September \_\_\_\_, 2008

VIA FACSIMILE

The Honorable NAME  
United States Senate/U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20510/20515

Dear Senator / Representative NAME:

On behalf of the [NAME OF TRIBE] I am writing to thank you for your support of legislation to reauthorize the *Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996*. This important legislation would alleviate the conditions from which Native Americans suffer including inadequate and often-overcrowded housing and stagnant tribal economies that generate little in the way of revenues and job opportunities for tribal members. The reauthorization bills now pending, H.R.2786 and S.2062, would update the underlying statute and improve the delivery of housing, housing-related infrastructure, and community development projects to low income Native Americans.

For over two years the [NAME OF TRIBE] has been working hard to enact this legislation and you can be assured that the bill has the strong support of Indian Tribes from across the country as well as the support of the National American Indian Housing Council, the sole national organization representing Indian housing authorities on housing and related matters.

Swift passage of reauthorization legislation is critical because as Congress reconvenes from its summer recess, it will be in session for only three weeks before adjourning for the year. The [NAME OF TRIBE] appreciates your strong support for the housing bill and your ongoing support for the well-being of Native people

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

NAME  
TITLE