



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 and Alaska Native Villages and on Hawaiian Home Lands.

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ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Thank you for all of your letters and telephone calls to make sure that Native American housing was included in the massive \$789 billion economic stimulus bill intended to rebuild our infrastructure and create jobs. Below is breakdown for programs related to Tribal Housing:

NAHASDA \$510 million total

\$255 million to be allocated to the Indian Housing Block Grant and distributed by formula with priority to projects that can be bid and contracted within 180 days from the date the funds are available to recipients.

\$255 million to be allocated competitively with priority to projects that will spur construction and rehabilitation and create employment opportunities for low-income and unemployed persons; obligate 100 percent of funds within one year; and spend at least 50 percent within 2 years and 100 percent within 3 years.

Department of the Interior

Housing Improvement Program \$20 million (BIA)

Health and Human Services \$545 million total (IHS)

Sanitation Facilities \$100 million

This week the House of Representative and the Senate reportedly struck an agreement on conferencing their versions of the American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Here is a quick breakdown:

\$150 billion Infrastructure \$275 billion Tax Cuts

3.5 million Jobs Creation \$54 billion State Aid

The President is expected to sign the bill by President's Day. See the bill at www.naihc.net.

Accountability and transparency will be key in the execution of this plan. The American people will be watching and reporting on where and how the money is being spent via www.recovery.gov which goes live once signed into law.

CABINET UPDATE

President Barack Obama named Shaun Donovan as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The U.S. Senate confirmed his appointment on January 22, 2009. Mr. Donovan formerly served as the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation & Development.

In a confirmation hearing held on January 13, 2009 before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, Native America played into the line of questioning of two Members. Senator Daniel Akaka (D-HI) asked Mr. Donovan how he would strengthen the housing assistance programs for Native Hawaiians that are administered by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. Mr. Donovan expressed his belief that local communities are the best ones to meet housing needs and a strong recognition that such programs need flexibility in order to be most effective.

Senator Jon Tester's (D-MT) line of questioning focused on rural and Native American housing. Mr. Donovan indicated an appreciation for, and his desire to learn more about, the federal trust responsibility and the unique needs in Indian Country. Senator Tester invited him to Montana to see tribal housing and meet with tribal leaders.

NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING

Stay on top of what is going on with the 2009 round of negotiated rulemaking on the NAHASDA amendments. On January 12, 2009 HUD issued a Notice for Initiation of Negotiated Rulemaking. Upcoming deadline: April 12, 2009: HUD must Establish a Negotiated Rulemaking Committee. Get your nominations ready. See background material and updates on the NAIHC website at www.naihc.net.

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

The Legislative Conference is February 24-26, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill in Washington DC. Quick agenda: February 24: Legislative Committee meeting; February 25: Plenary and Advocacy Briefing; February 26: Hill visits. Register now at www.naihc.net.