AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

S. HRG. 110–92

TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

APRIL 12, 2007

Printed for the use of the Committee on Indian Affairs

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

34–906 PDF WASHINGTON : 2007

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402–0001

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

BYRON L. DORGAN, North Dakota, *Chairman*
CRAIG THOMAS, Wyoming, *Vice Chairman*

DANIEL K. INOUYE, Hawaii
KENT CONRAD, North Dakota
DANIEL K. AKAKA, Hawaii
TIM JOHNSON, South Dakota
MARIA CANTWELL, Washington
CLAIRE MCCASKILL, Missouri
JON TESTER, Montana

JOHN MCCAIN, Arizona
PETE V. DOMENICI, New Mexico
GORDON H. SMITH, Oregon
LISA MURKOWSKI, Alaska
RICHARD BURR, North Carolina
TOM COBURN, M.D., Oklahoma

SARA G. GARLAND, *Majority Staff Director*
DAVID A. MULLON, JR., *Minority Staff Director*

CONTENTS

	Page
Hearing held on April 12, 2007	1
Statement of Senator Dorgan	1
Statement of Senator Tester	10
Statement of Senator Thomas	3

WITNESSES

Artman, Carl J., Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior	3
Prepared statement	5
Gipp, Dr. David M., Past President and Board Member, American Indian Higher Education Consortium; President, United Tribes Technical College	14
Prepared statement	17
Guy, Elmer J., President, Navajo Technical College; Board Member, American Indian Higher Education Consortium	23
Prepared statemaent	25
Keltner, Dr. Bette, Dean, School of Nursing and Health Studies, Georgetown University	33
Prepared statement	35
Merisotis, Jamie P., President, Institute for Higher Education Policy	27
Prepared statement	29

APPENDIX

Conrad, Hon. Kent, U.S. Senator from North Dakota, prepared statement	45

TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m. in room 485, Senate Russell Office Building, Hon. Byron Dorgan, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

STATEMENT OF HON. BYRON L. DORGAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH DAKOTA

The CHAIRMAN. We will call the hearing to order. I will be joined momentarily by Vice Chairman Thomas.

Because of impending votes this morning in the U.S. Senate, I want to begin on time and I don't want to have a lengthy recess for votes and inconvenience witnesses.

I want to thank Mr. Artman for being here. This is Carl Artman's first appearance before the committee since being confirmed as assistant secretary for Indian Affairs. We very much appreciate his being here. We appreciate the other witnesses as well.

Senator Thomas, I just began as the buzzer started for the Senate. I pointed out that we have votes this morning, and I am hoping to get through the witnesses and hear their testimony before we have to have a lengthy recess for votes. I know that we also have an Energy Committee meeting concurrent with this. So forgive me for banging the gavel on time.

Senator THOMAS. That is fine.

The CHAIRMAN. I want to make a brief opening statement to try to set the stage for this discussion, which I think is very important.

The purpose of today's oversight hearing on tribal colleges and universities is to receive testimony that will instruct us in amending the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978. The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions is currently drafting a bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act of 1965. The Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978 is included under Title III of the Higher Education Act. We have been working closely with the HELP Committee to ensure that amendments requested by tribal colleges and universities and considered by us are included in this session's reauthorization bill.

So today we will hear from the Department of the the Interior responsible for providing grants for 26 tribally controlled colleges, funding to two post-secondary career and vocational technical institutions, and directly operating two tribal colleges.

We will receive testimony from others, including David Gipp, President of the United Tribes Technical College, and Elmer Guy, President of the Navajo Technical College in Arizona and New Mexico. Jamie Merisotis of the Institute for Higher Education Policy will share with us recent quantitative and qualitative analysis and research into Indian higher education.

I have long been a strong supporter of tribal colleges and universities because I believe they benefit the community and the individual student substantially. In many cases, the only kind of higher education that would be available to some of these students is the higher education that is available in their community where so many other extended family opportunities are available for child care and support for these students, many of whom are non-traditional students.

I have put up a map that shows there are 34 tribal colleges and universities throughout the United States. There are five tribal colleges in my State. They offer a wide range of accredited programs from business administration to nursing, and many in between.

In addition to college level programming, tribal colleges and universities also offer high school completion GED programs, job training and college preparatory courses as well. They are an essential part of their communities, often serving as community centers, libraries, tribal archives, career and business centers, and much, much more.

If I might have a photograph put up, a photograph of the Oglala Lakota College in Kyle, SD. It has a unique decentralized campus system featuring college centers in each of the nine districts of the Pine Ridge Reservation. That allows students to stay in touch with their communities and still attend college. It is a very unique and interesting college that I wanted to bring to your attention. It offers bachelor's and master's degrees. It has produced 71 percent of the elementary education teachers who teach on the reservation, and 76 percent of the nurses.

About 28,000 American Indian and Alaska Native students are served by these tribal colleges. As I have indicated, it is critically important to their lives and to their opportunity for higher education. Let me just show a couple of quick photos. This is a photo of Joey Awanopei, a student from the College of the Menominee Nation in Wisconsin. He is a traditional Menominee family member, remained rooted in their language, culture and beliefs.

He and his brothers were traditionally raised by their grandparents in a small remote town on the Menominee Reservation. Joey has earned an associate's degree from a tribal college. His goal is to be a certified teacher in a tribal school, and a positive Indian male role model. He plans to earn a bachelor's degree. In the meantime, he has obtained certification as a traditional Menominee speaker and a middle school language teacher. What a wonderful inspiration.

Here is one additional photograph of Nikki Smoker. In her early forties, if we could put that chart up, she has dealt with personal tragedies that would crush most people. In the past few years, she has lost a 16-year old daughter to heart failure, a 20-year old son to a car accident, and her husband of many years to cancer. She is a grandmother to many, raising many foster children and chil-

dren of extended families. At one point, she had 15 people living in her four bedroom home. Her home is always open to people of need.

Even as she has cared for others, she has attended tribal college and received a certificate in tribal law and justice from Fort Peck Community College in Montana. And now she plans on attending a 4-year university. Again, she is an inspiring story, and I do that only to point out that this is about individuals with interests in improving their lives and getting a better education. Tribal colleges allow that opportunity to exist. For those reasons, I strongly support the tribal college system.

Let me call on my colleague, Senator Thomas.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

STATEMENT OF HON. CRAIG THOMAS, U.S. SENATOR FROM WYOMING

Senator THOMAS. Welcome, Mr. Artman. Glad to have you here.

I think certainly the tribal colleges are an opportunity for tribal members to develop skills and gain education that is especially important. These opportunities include the tribal colleges for economic development, for energy and entrepreneurial tracks. We are looking forward to that in Wyoming, as a matter of fact, and starting to establish a startup college there. There are lots of opportunities for things that we haven't yet been able to take advantage of.

So we just obviously need to be more prepared for competitiveness in this century, and these are the kinds of things that would help there.

So I welcome the witnesses and I am glad we are having this hearing, and I certainly support the tribal college program.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Thomas, thank you very much.

Assistant Secretary Artman, thank you for being here. We will include the full statements of all of the witnesses today as a part of the permanent record of the Committee. We would ask that you summarize.

Again, welcome on your first occasion back as Assistant Secretary. You may proceed.

STATEMENT OF CARL J. ARTMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Mr. ARTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Vice Chairman and Members of the Committee.

I will just hit a few salient points in these opening comments.

I am pleased to be here today to speak about post-secondary tribal education, as I served on the President's Board of Advisors for Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU) from 2002 to 2006. This is an area of great importance to me.

The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) is committed to improving the overall quality of our education system. The BIE system includes two post-secondary institutions: Haskell Indian Nations University and the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute.

The BIE also administers grants to 25 tribal colleges and universities. In addition, the Department of Education provides funds to improve and strengthen the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible TCU.

Each year, our system serves approximately 46,000 Indian students in grades K–12, and we are striving to support a seamless education program from early childhood through adulthood by providing safe, secure and healthy learning environments that promote academic achievement and successful student transition to post-secondary education.

This summer in Denver, CO, on July 24–26, the BIE will hold its first National Partnership Conference to promote collaboration and cooperation with the various stakeholders of the BIE education system. The goal of the conference is to better use available stakeholder resources to support student achievement. The American Indian Higher Education Consortium, AIHEC, will be representing the TCU and is a key conference partner focusing on student transition to post-secondary education.

Just a brief overview. Looking at the TCU operations funding, appropriations for TCU have increased approximately 45 percent in the past 15 years, with authorized appropriations for tribal colleges remaining relatively steady over the past 3 years. TCU student enrollments have increased and the number of tribal colleges funded under the Tribally Controlled Community Colleges Assistance Act have grown from only a few in the early 1980s to 25 as of Fiscal Year 2007.

Funding is limited to a one school per tribe basis, using a formula that funds each TCU based on the full-time student equivalency rate. Currently, the act is funded at $54 million for operating grants.

With regards to the Endowment Program, included in the act is a provision for endowments at TCU. Each year, based on the availability, TCU may receive endowments from the BIE which are, in turn, matched by the TCU at one-half of the Government's contribution and placed in a restricted interest-bearing account. Interest received from that account can be used by the colleges to defray the expenses of running the college. The BIE has funded close to $8 million in endowments to TCU since 1999.

Technical assistance is another provision of the act. By election and resolution of the tribal colleges, AIHEC currently receives the technical assistance funds in the amount of about $600,000 per year to provide various technical assistance services to TCU. Since 1999, just under $2 million has been provided for technical assistance to the TCU.

In an effort to monitor and promote the success of the program, the BIE maintains an ongoing collaboration with AIHEC and the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities. This efforts helps ensure that TCU receive adequate support to carry out their mission. As part of its annual plan, AIHEC provides the BIE with a progress report each year, as well as a description of the continuing efforts made on behalf of TCU.

The Honors Program. Most recently, we have sought out the help of tribal colleges to implement what we are calling our Honors Program, a program designed to hire top Indian students into Indian Affairs. This is broken into three levels: High school, junior college, community college, and then college, or university. Graduates can be appointed directly into the Indian Affairs positions. Our BIE and Human Resources Office are working with three tribal colleges

to provide opportunities for students attending these colleges to earn class credits, while developing marketing plans to advertise the program and its benefits to Indian students.

In terms of economic development, Indian Affairs supports other initiatives such as our recent partnership with Colorado School of Mines, United Tribes Technical College, and the Navajo Technical College to develop an energy-oriented curriculum for Indian colleges. Our Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development provided a grant to CSM to develop a curriculum in partnership with UTTC and NTC. CSM will provide faculty training and will team-teach some of the course. They will be retained as technical support in later years.

Internship opportunities are being established with energy-focused companies, and we hope to create opportunities for high performing students to transfer into a full 4-year program at CSM.

On related matters, I had the opportunity yesterday to meet with Nick Lowery, the acting chair of the National Fund for Excellence in American Indian Education. I am happy to report that we made progress at this meeting. I expect that we should be able to help the Fund achieve its milestones. Some of the issues discussed included supplementation of personnel during the startup phase, a commitment to more frequent communications regarding the progress and the needs of the Fund, and working with the Fund representatives to facilitate the transfer of bequeathed moneys from OST to the Fund.

The National Fund provides an important component to the overall Indian education picture, and I look forward to helping it achieve its goals.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, and Members of the Committee, I want to thank you for inviting me to testify here today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Artman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARL J. ARTMAN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, and Members of the Committee. My name is Carl Artman and I am the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs at the Department of the Interior. I am pleased to be here today to speak about post-secondary Indian education. This is a topic of great interest to me. From 2002 to 2006, I served on the President's Board of Advisors on Tribal Colleges and Universities.

Background

The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), formerly the Office of Indian Education Programs within the Bureau of Indian Affairs, is committed to improving the overall quality of our education system. The BIE is a unique system which includes 184 elementary and secondary schools located across 23 states—66 of these schools include residential components (dormitories) and two post-secondary colleges: Haskell Indian Nations University and the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute. The BIE also administers grants to 25 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU). In addition, the Department of Education provides funds to improve and strengthen the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible TCU.

Each year our system serves approximately 46,000 Indian students in grades K–12. We are striving to support a seamless education program from early childhood through adulthood by providing safe, secure, and healthy learning environments that promote academic achievement and successful student transition to post-secondary education.

We must improve our overall high school graduation rate and we also need to better prepare our students academically so they have the option of continuing their

education at the post-secondary level. In meeting the workforce needs of the 21st century, nearly 90 percent of the fastest growing jobs in this country require post-secondary education. TCU provide for many of our students the next step in that educational development. However, before students can move on to college course work, they must acquire foundational knowledge in math, science, and language skills. We want to work more collaboratively with our TCU partners to identify better ways to better prepare our students for college course work. This could include "student enhancing" efforts of bridging programs and individualized tutoring services.

This summer in Denver, Colorado (July 24–26, 2007), the BIE will hold its first national partnership conference to promote collaboration and cooperation with the various stakeholders of the BIE education system. The goal of the conference is to better use available stakeholder resources to support student achievement. The American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), representing the TCU, is a key conference partner focusing on student transition to post-secondary education.

Overview of TCU Program Functions

TCU Operations Funding

Our elementary and secondary education programs use 90 percent of the BIE's total budget. Appropriations for TCU have increased approximately 45 percent in the past 15 years with the authorized appropriations for tribal colleges remaining relatively steady over the past 3 years. TCU student enrollments have increased and the number of tribal colleges funded under the Act has grown from only a few in the early 1980s to 25 as of FY 2007. Funding is limited to a one-school-per-tribe basis, using a formula that funds each TCU based on a full-time student equivalency.

The BIE's primary function in implementing the Act has been historically more administrative than service-oriented. These functions include collecting and reviewing applications for eligibility to receive TCU operating grants, ensuring that funds reach the tribal colleges, and ensuring tribal colleges receive necessary technical assistance required to fulfill their commitment under the Act. The BIE carries out its responsibility to the TCU by administering the appropriated funds intended to defray expenditures for academic, educational and administrative purposes, and for the operation and maintenance of the tribal colleges.

Currently, the Act is funded at $54 million for operating grants. In 2007 the BIE is administering operating grants to 25 Tribal Colleges and Universities. In 2006, these schools offered over 350 degree programs and 180 vocational programs. During 2006, the TCU served 27,897 Indian students and conferred 1,298 degrees and certificates.

Endowment Program

Included in the Act is a provision for endowments to TCU. Each year, based on availability, TCU may receive endowments from the BIE, which are in turn matched by the TCU at the rate of one-half of the government's contribution, and placed in restricted interest-bearing accounts. Interest income received by the colleges is available to the college to supplement and further defray the expense of running the college. The BIE has funded close to $8 million in endowments to TCU since 1999.

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance (TA) is another provision of the Act. By election and resolution of the tribal colleges, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) currently receives the TA funds in the amount of $600,000 to provide various technical assistance services to TCU. Since 1999, just under $2 million has been provided for TA to TCU.

In an effort to monitor and promote the success of the TA program, the BIE maintains ongoing collaboration with the AIHEC and the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities (WHITCU). This effort helps to ensure that TCU receive adequate support to carry out their mission. As a part of its annual plan, AIHEC provides the BIE with a progress report each year as well as a description of the continuing efforts made on behalf of the TCU.

Collaboration requires ongoing interaction to be productive and successful. The BIE participates in meetings with the WHITCU Advisory Board members, the Tribal Colleges and Universities Annual Presidents' Planning Session sponsored by AIHEC, and the National 2007 Summer Conference. AIHEC is one of the partners for this conference.

Honors Program

Most recently, we have sought out the help of the tribal colleges to implement the Honors Program—a program designed to hire top Indian students into Indian Affairs. The Honors Program is designed to provide opportunities at three educational levels—High School, Junior/Community College, and College/University. Graduates can be appointed directly into available Indian Affairs positions. Our BIE and Human Resources Office are working with three tribal colleges to provide opportunities for students attending these colleges to earn class credits while developing marketing plans to advertise the program and its benefits to Indian students and Indian Affairs management.

BIE's Adult Education (Tribal)

Indian Affairs is implementing strategies to support our vision of "life-long learning" and to improve the literacy of American Indians residing on reservations. The BIE's Adult Education Program is funded at $2,441,000, and allows tribes to direct their Tribal Priority Allocation funds to adult learning situations where adults are able to obtain a GED or gain the basic skills they need to transition into a community or tribal college and/or job placement. Oftentimes, students attending tribal colleges and universities require remedial education in basic math and reading skills. This program provides educational opportunities for individuals who lack the level of literacy skills necessary for a smooth transition into post-secondary education. Graduation rates for American Indians are currently lower than the national average; the program supports the advancement of students to higher levels of education. Participation in adult basic education, community education, and developmental courses leads to upgraded skills and abilities to match job placements with community members, thus creating opportunities for developing stronger local economies in Indian communities.

Tribal College Teacher's Aide Training

Indian Affairs has requested program enhancement funds of over $5 million to support initiatives such as the Teacher's Aide Training program, consistent with the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which provides for the *Qualifications for Teachers and Paraprofessionals.* The BIE-funded TCU play an important role in developing specialized certification programs for current, new, and potential teacher aides for Indian schools. Programs can develop the training through distance learning or classroom instruction, with local or regional concentration and emphasis, following the "grow your own" philosophy. Indian schools located in remote and isolated areas often rely on members who have a vested interest in their communities and wish to remain in jobs on the reservations.

Of the 25 TCU, 15 provide at least an Associate's degree in elementary education, two are identified as having teacher's aide programs, and the remaining TCU have classes in early childhood education and/or development.

Other Tribal College Projects—Partnering With Economic Development

Indian Affairs supports other initiatives such as our recent partnership with the Colorado School of Mines (CSM), the United Tribes Technical College (UTTC), and the Navajo Technical College (NTC) (formerly Crown Point Institute of Technology) to develop energy, educational, vocational, and technology curriculum for Indian colleges. Our Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) provided a grant to CSM to develop a curriculum in partnership with UTTC and NTC. The CSM will provide faculty training and will team-teach some portions of the curriculum; they will also be retained as a future source of technical expertise for the colleges. Internship opportunities will be established with energy industries and we will create opportunities for high performing students to transfer into a full 4-year degree program at the CSM. We are looking at additional opportunities to expand on this initiative.

Conclusion

With high unemployment rates in Indian Country, solidifying the tribal colleges' infrastructures is critical. Increased collaboration and partnerships between TCU and federal, state, regional and local entities must be established in a manner that addresses specific needs. Education and workforce development will lead to local employment opportunities where tribal members can reinvest in a sustainable local economy. Education must provide not only a seamless process of continuing lifelong educational opportunities, but the necessary skill sets for our Indian communities to offer a vibrant labor pool which will lead to economic growth for all Indian people.

The challenges as well as benefits are shared by all. In order to promote change, vested parties must establish economic development plans that involve potential

business and industry opportunities, tribal college administrators, community-planning officials, and various federal, state, regional, local and tribal governments.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for inviting me to testify today on such an important issue for our Indian people. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Secretary Artman, thank you very much for your willingness to provide leadership at this important time.

Let me ask an obvious question, I guess, and that is, with flat funding, which is where we are with tribal colleges on the appropriations side, and a circumstance where the tribal colleges are already substantially below the amount of contribution per student that goes to, for example, junior colleges, and community colleges, and so on, are we not going to lose ground rather than gain ground if we only have flat funding and don't provide at least for inflation with respect to the tribal colleges appropriation? What is your sense of that?

Mr. ARTMAN. Right now, the BIE and my office are core-focused on K–12 education. We are striving to, as I mentioned in the testimony, to provide a seamless transition. So we are trying to make the most of the funds that we do have outside of that K–12 core focus, to get that into the TCU hands. There have been fluctuations in funding, but we are working with the Department of Education and others to make sure funds get there.

We are looking at partnership opportunities with industries, to provide careers and perhaps other additional funds to the schools. We are working with schools like the Colorado School of Mines and similar opportunities perhaps to that in other areas as well, to provide additional funds, to amortize the costs to these tribal colleges and universities.

As I mentioned, it is a very important program to us, but we do have to do with what we have and focus on our core mission.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I understand making do with what we have, but if tribal college enrollment is increasing and we have flat funding, that, it seems to me, will be a problem, especially if we believe that the tribal college system contributes a great deal to the lives of these people that now have opportunities to get educated in their tribal colleges.

So we will have to work on that and talk about that, but there is an enrollment increase and it reflects the popularity of the opportunity that is available now that was not available many years ago.

With respect to K–12, we have had the GAO do an evaluation of the condition of the infrastructure with respect to the BIA schools and so on. What the GAO has shown is that there is a significant problem with respect to the infrastructure investment that is needed that is not available to bring those schools up to standard. Do you have any observations about what your plans are, or what the Department of the Interior's plans are with respect to that?

Mr. ARTMAN. The GAO report is enlightening. Last week, I was down in New Mexico and visited Laguna Pueblo. I had an opportunity to take a look at their elementary school. You can see stark examples of where facilities moneys are desperately needed. In their case, there were a number of cracks in the foundation that

went up through the walls. They have supported it now. They have taken mitigation measures, but that is a good example.

This is an area of great importance to us. What we have done is, with our facilities manager, he has been able to develop priorities and processes. He is expediting the funds that are getting to the schools. I think what we have now is not everything will be fixed immediately, but we now have a schedule that we can look to, and we can point to say that this school will be fixed in this particular year if funding stays at the same level. That is what we are focused on.

We have eliminated a lot of bureaucracy and we have given some assurance to the schools that are out there that need the funds when they will get the funds.

The CHAIRMAN. As you begin your work in these areas, would you work with us to give us an analysis? The GAO didn't do it institution by institution, but it evaluated the circumstances that existed with respect to the BIA-run schools and the infrastructure needs, and the fact that these children are going to schools that are in pretty substantial disrepair in some cases. Can you work with us to give us an analysis of what are the institutions? Where are they? What is the schedule? How long would it take to make the investments?

The reason I ask the question is, you walk into a school that is in substantial disrepair, with a student sitting in a classroom with 30 kids; desks one inch apart. I went into one school that I have talked about with 150 kids, two toilets, one water fountain, crowded classrooms. That young kid that walks through that third grade classroom isn't going to get the same education as a kid that is in another school where there are 15 students and new facilities, or facilities at least not in disrepair.

So could you give us an analysis as you begin to work on all of this? What are the specific schools? What are the needs? What is the time line? How do you see us beginning to address them so that we can talk about it more in the specifics with the appropriators and others, rather than just the abstract?

Mr. ARTMAN. I would be happy to do that.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you be willing to do that?

Mr. ARTMAN. Mr. Chairman, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Thomas.

Senator THOMAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You mentioned this matter of the National Fund for Excellence in Indian Education. Why hasn't that money been transferred?

Mr. ARTMAN. There have been a number of legal issues surrounding that money. Yesterday, we had a good opportunity to hash through some of those legal issues and come to some resolution on that. We committed to having an opinion to them on the legal implications, the legal liability attached to that money to the National Fund within a month. We are going to be working with their legal counsel in developing that opinion as well.

Senator THOMAS. Good, very good.

Technology obviously is most important for preparing students for this century. I have been told that Haskell doesn't even have internet services in the student dorms. Why isn't there more emphasis on improving those technological services?

Mr. ARTMAN. Technology, especially in today's educational world, is an important part of education. If at home or at school, the more opportunity students get to use technology, the more they will be able to adapt to the workplace. Specifically with regard to Haskell University and Internet access, Internet access is available in the common areas of the dorms there. It is available in the individual student rooms, but it is very much like cable television. If they want it outside of the common areas, they need to subscribe to it at this point in time.

Senator THOMAS. You mentioned the Colorado School of Mines affiliation. Isn't it a good idea to have more of that? Couldn't there be opportunities to be affiliated with other colleges to increase the opportunities through these affiliations?

Mr. ARTMAN. I think so, Mr. Vice Chairman. The Colorado School of Mines examples dovetails extremely well with also our goals in economic development focusing on the energy aspect of that. I think you are going to see more partnerships coming out and created in the area of dovetailing with medical schools that may have excellent educational opportunities in the medical profession, or teaching in the teaching area. So yes, we are going to be taking more advantage of those situations.

Senator THOMAS. We don't have many of these facilities in Wyoming. We just have one small college kind of beginning, but they are close to a community college. And even in that instance, it seems as if they could pick up some additional things.

Funding, of course, is always an issue. What about tribal colleges participating in State and private funding and other kinds of ways of helping finances? Is there an opportunity there?

Mr. ARTMAN. I think there is. I think you are seeing that a lot of tribal colleges are taking advantage of those situations and looking for new opportunities. Depending upon which college you are talking about, the funds that come from the BIE fund 30 percent to 60 percent of the needs of the tribal colleges. So tribal college presidents are looking to other resources out there.

Having had the opportunity to work with some of these presidents before, they are an extremely smart and resourceful group of individuals who are doing yeoman's work in making their colleges work. I know that they are looking to other opportunities. To what degree that we can help facilitate that, we will put ourselves out there.

Senator THOMAS. That is great.

I think Indian colleges are important because they focus on what we want to have accomplished here, but they can certainly gain more quickly by affiliating themselves with some other organizations to help in funding programs.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Tester.

STATEMENT OF HON. JON TESTER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MONTANA

Senator TESTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being here today, Carl.

Over the Easter break, I had a tribal college summit, interestingly enough. It is fair to say that we have our work cut out for us to hopefully address some of those needs.

I just want to start with a comment. One of the individuals that came and visited with us talked about the K–12 issue. Potentially, maybe we could have him here someday to be on a panel here talking about at-risk kids. He told me that his figures are showing pretty much across the United States, but in Montana I can tell you that almost every at-risk kid in that State is Native American. The lines are so clear that it is scary.

Interestingly enough, those Native American kids that happen to be in school districts that tend to be more affluent are at risk. Those kind of things, they are challenges that we have to deal with here to try to allow everybody to be the best they can be.

But one of the things that was talked about at the summit that I didn't hear you speak about a lot in relationship to tribal colleges is building funds, funds for buildings. There are tribal colleges, for example, that want to set up dorms for their college students. What is your assessment of availability of building funds out there in regards to tribal colleges?

Mr. ARTMAN. Senator Tester, with regard to the specific amount available for building funds, I would have to look into that and get back to you, sir, and I will do that. Through our endowment funds, the interest that is received off of those accounts, and that has been a varying amount, so I am not saying that that is going to be the fund that saves it, but that is available to use for building funds.

As you know, the grants that come from the BIE to tribal colleges under 471 come with some restrictions on it, which may or may not allow them to be used for building purposes. But I will be happy to look into that and get back to you with the number.

Senator TESTER. I would like to know. And with the number, would you give me, if you have this, Carl, and you may or may not, some sort of assessment of the need out there versus what is there. Because we happened to be in the facility on the Blackfeet Reservation. They have some great facilities there. I have been just about in every tribal school, and there are some building needs there. But their overall classrooms, at least in Montana, are fairly impressive from my perspective. But there are some needs out there for research facilities, science labs, and dormitories that they don't have, for sure, and there may be others, too.

That is it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ARTMAN. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Secretary, let me also say that Mr. Lowery on behalf of the National Fund for Excellence in American Indian Education met with me the day before yesterday to talk about those issues. I am pleased that you are working on that because as you know it is a federally chartered organization that has not yet been given an opportunity to really get started. I know that the Secretary had indicated that they would provide some space and perhaps some clerical assistance. They are interested in trying to determine when that which has been contributed to the Department of the Interior

from estates and so on that could be used in this 501(c)(3) that has been federally chartered, when that might be transferred to them.

So I appreciate the fact that you are working on that. I think that, using private sector funds that are donated into this federally chartered organization, it can also be an important supplement for Indian education. So your work on that is important, and I appreciate that.

Let me make another point here that is important to emphasize. Tribal colleges are different. They are different because in most cases they are on Federal trust lands. State governments have their own circumstances. They have no obligation to fund tribal colleges and they by and large do not. There are no local property taxes or no local property base on which to levy taxes. So you can't support the tribal colleges that way.

That is why we have this different system to fund tribal colleges. They are very important in the lives of Native Americans. I have spoken about many of them. I have showed a couple of photographs today of them, that are inspiring because they in many cases are non-traditional students. I told you, Mr. Artman, about speaking at a tribal college, and asking at the graduation ceremony at that tribal college, who is the oldest one here. And they said, she is the oldest one; and I went and talked to her; 40 some years old, who had been cleaning the toilets and the hallways in the college; a single mother of four who decided, I want to do more than clean the hallways and clean the bathrooms; I want to graduate.

And the day I showed up, she was wearing a cap and a gown and a big smile because she had graduated from that college. She could not have done that except for the tribal college, because she had relatives that could provide child care. She could continue to do some work, and at her home area go to a tribal college. It is the only way this woman got a college degree.

That is happening all over the country in ways that are very inspiring. It is why I care so much about these tribal colleges. We have to have adequate funding. I gently asked you about the funding because I know what you will do. You are brand new to this job, but you are so practiced, as have to be all of the witnesses from the Administration. If I ask you a lot of drilling questions about funding, you come here and have to support the President's budget. If you didn't, when you get back to your office, they will clean out your desk.

So when I ask you the question: Is level funding adequate? You are going to dance around a little bit because that is your job. But you and I know, it is not adequate. If they have more people coming into these tribal colleges, and we have flat funding, and by the way, were it not for myself and a couple of others, we wouldn't be at $54 million. We would be at $40 million or $42 million. But flat funding means that with the ravages of inflation and more students, which is not a ravage, but is a blessing, but we are losing ground, not gaining ground. The contribution per student to tribal colleges relative to other colleges is at a very low level.

So my point is this, Mr. Artman. You can't answer the question the way I would hope you would or the way that we might if we were having a quiet conversation in a corner, and not in a Senate hearing, and I asked the question, are we adequately funding tribal

colleges. You can't answer it, so I won't ask it quite that way today. But I will say this to you, I hope that you will be a missionary inside the Department of the Interior for these issues of education, health care and housing. With respect to education, it is a labyrinth of issues, but today we are talking about tribal colleges.

That is the one area, and I think Senator Tester put his finger on it, where you come away inspired. You go to these places. You talk to these students. You find out what they have been confronting in life, and all of a sudden they are in college. They are so unbelievably proud of that opportunity to go to college and make something of themselves, because they know that is the step up and out to opportunity.

So I really want you to be aggressive on these issues in working with us. I can say what you can't say. We need to fund these in a manner that is fair. We need more funding when we have more students. We need to support these students the right way because these tribal colleges are critically important.

So you may want to respond to that, Mr. Artman, but don't get yourself in trouble.

[Laughter.]

Just tell me that you are interested in working with myself or Senator Thomas or Senator Tester and others to accomplish these goals. That would be helpful.

Mr. ARTMAN. I have been to a number of tribal colleges out there. In fact, Sitting Bull College in your State, I have been there before and know very well the former president of Sitting Bull College, Ron His Horse Is Thunder. He and I have had numerous discussions about the issues and needs there. I have been down to the Tohono O'odham Community College, and of course spent time at Haskell and less time at Sippy, but I want to spend more time down there as well, and others. They are doing inspirational work. The teachers and the administrators are doing excellent work down there. You are right about the students and their faces. You can see the pride and the determination in their faces. I look forward to working with you and the Committee on this issue.

The CHAIRMAN. I am hoping at long last that the Administration, and with your help probably inside as an agitator, that inside we will probably see in the next budget that the United Tribes Technical College, which serves tribes all around this Country and is in my judgment, and we will have a witness in the next panel, is just an unbelievably good school, and has been left out of the President's budget. I hope that you will be able to help us change that.

I talked to the previous Secretary, not the current Secretary. She even went there. She understands, but she for some reason through the OMB and the thickheadedness of people there, was saying we are not going to fund that school. It should be funded. It was always funded previously.

Anyway, we will talk about that as well. The United Tribes Technical College is a terrific institution and is providing hope to a lot of students.

It has been a long time, 2 years, that the position of assistant secretary was vacant. That was shameful, but we now have someone there that is, in my judgment, well qualified. I worked hard to try to get your nomination through the Senate.

Mr. ARTMAN. I appreciate that.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Tester did the same. Senator Thomas did the same. You are now there, and I know you want to be there to make a difference. We want to help you make a difference. So we appreciate your being here today on this subject. We are going to see a lot of each other on these issues because we face some very serious challenges, Mr. Secretary. We are glad that you have this role to play now and we want to help you be successful.

Mr. ARTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Tester.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much for being with us.

We will next hear from a panel that includes Dr. David Gipp, past President and Board Member of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, and currently President of the United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, ND; Elmer Guy, Board Member of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium and President of the Navajo Technical College in Crownpoint, NM; Jamie Merisotis, and I hope I have pronounced that correctly, Jamie, who is President of the Institute for Higher Education Policy, Washington, DC; and Dr. Bette Keltner, Dean, School of Nursing and Health Studies at Georgetown University.

Mr. Artman, I did not invite you to, and I should have identified I guess it was Dr. Keltner sitting next to Mr. Artman.

Ms. KELTNER. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. OK. So we are fine.

Let me thank all four of you for being here. We have Board Members who are accompanying Elmer Guy: Caroline Tom, the Chairman of the board. Caroline, where are you? Thank you very much for being with us. Steve Grey? Steve, thank you for being with us. I want to recognize also before I begin with this panel, Chairwoman Myra Pearson, the Chair of the United Tribes Board. Myra, thank you very much for being with us. We appreciate your presence today.

Why don't we begin, Dr. Gipp, with you? My understanding is that next month will mark 30 years as president of the United Tribes Technical College. I don't want to make you sound like Gabby Hayes or something, but 30 years is a long time.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. But more than just the United Tribes Technical College, you have been a real leader in education in this Country. We appreciate your being here and appreciate your work on Indian education.

Let me ask, as I have indicated before, your entire statements will be made part of the record, so if you would please summarize for us. We will begin with Dr. Gipp.

STATEMENT OF DR. DAVID M. GIPP, PAST PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBER, AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM; PRESIDENT, UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Dr. GIPP. Thank you, Senator. I appreciate the parallel to Gabby Hayes and I am glad to be here. I don't know that Gabby is anymore; 30 years goes by fast in many respects. I have been in the tribal college business, if you will, for about 35 years, working on this whole effort. We have gone from six tribal colleges back in

1972, when I first started out working for that effort. We now have over 35 tribal colleges. So we are pleased to see the growth.

We serve over 30,000 students now, among all of us nationwide. I am proud to say that United Tribes Technical College and Navajo Technical College, and Dr. Guy will be speaking shortly about that, are part of that effort to really change the way of life for Native people and for tribal governments. As you know, we have the fastest growing population in the United States when we talk about 51 percent or better of our population is under the age of 25 now. So the real challenge is really to bring quality education and to give hope and inspiration, but do it through education so that every one of our people have the skills and the ability to move ahead and bring their families and their tribes up to a 21st century level of participation in society. This is what it boils down to.

That is how I look at this. That is why I think 30 years for me has gone by fast. It has been fun. It has been great. But we have had some disparities and some difficulties sometimes with the U.S. Government in their obligation to tribal colleges as part of treaty-based tribes, and that obligation to provide education for and by Native people. That is what this is all about, creating our own determination; creating our own pathway into that future.

So to me, that is really what underlies and undergirds what we do. I have a student from United Tribes who graduated in 1992. Everybody gave up on him. He had alcohol problems. He had attempts at suicide. He graduated from United Tribes. He is a Wisconsin Chippewa. Today, he is Vice President of my campus in Student Services. He is working on his doctorate right now. He has a family of eight children. He is a tax-producing citizen, if you will, on our campus. He lives in Bismarck, ND and is doing outstanding. Likewise, he is serving as a role model for other Native people.

I know that we all have these different kinds of stories within our institutions in terms of the origins of what is happening back in those tribal communities.

But let me get to the issue of our testimony. I do ask, of course, that it is part of the record, both for ourselves and for all of the tribal colleges. Today, I appear for the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the 35 member organization that I referred to a bit earlier. We are talking about the issues of higher education and how we fit into that as a part of U.S. policy on higher education.

When I first started out back 35 or 37 years ago in this effort, we were not welcome into the higher education community because many of the remarks that were being said was that, hey, how can you American Indian people do your own thing? You don't have qualified people to do those things. Well, today we do. By doing and persevering, I think it is very important that we continue this effort of being a part of higher education.

To that end, we recommend that the Tribal Colleges and Universities Act of 1978 be continued as an amendment to the overall reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, and that we also see that the title III programs under the Higher Education Act are provided for more fully, more completely, and with a formula that will allow for equitable distribution of funds for those developing insti-

tutions, because indeed, we are developing institutions that participate and provide those firsthand opportunities to Native people.

Second, we also urge that there be a hard look at this issue of facilities. Senator Tester, you mentioned this issue of facilities. We don't get any kind of maintenance money from the BIA or from anyone else. To build a building, whether it is a toilet or whether it is a classroom or whether it is a science lab, we have to go out and really, really dig in every way we can looking for those resources to put a basic facility in place on our campuses.

So we need the continued help of title III higher education facilities programs, by the way. They have been very helpful, but more is very, very important in the future. Equity is very, very important when we talk about that, equity and access for our populations and for the institutions that we administer.

Second, in terms of our testimony, I also want to point out there is a provision that is being put forth that would allow for more funds to go to mainstream institutions that perhaps serve Native American students. While we think this is good, we are very concerned that we would see a diminishment of dollars that would go to the students that we serve on our campuses.

Third, we urge that the basic operating funds that are provided under the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act be increased from roughly about the $5,200. Actually, it is authorized at $6,000. We are recommending that that authorization be upped to $8,000 per annum per student, is what it boils down to.

Last, we urge that forward funding be included for tribal colleges and universities. This is a major problem, because our institutions are poor schools. We don't have the rich, big endowments. We don't have State funds or even tribal funds to rely on to keep us going during the interim years when we go from one fiscal year to the next. So forward funding is very critical to the day to day operations of our institutions.

Last, we urge that the Congress take a hard look at providing specific legislative authorization to Navajo Technical College and United Tribes Technical College. For 6 years now, the Administration has left us out of the budget. Senators and Mr. Chairman, you know full well that we have been a part of the budget, at least in the case of United Tribes, since 1969. We have good tribal support. We have good community support. We have good results and good data.

Mr. Chairman, I met with the Office of Management and Budget about 2 years ago on this subject. I will tell you, the most frank answer I have received from this Administration is that until you are a favorite of the Secretary of the Interior, you are not going to get funded. It is a political question. We know that the BIA and the new BIE have the authority to fund us and to authorize it, and to ask for these funds, but they do not. So we ask that legislation be provided under a new Title V that would be under part of the Tribal Colleges and Universities Act as it would be reauthorized into the future.

We do have solid support from our colleague institutions. Just 2 weeks ago, the presidents of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium passed a resolution supporting legislation that will be beneficial to these schools.

I won't go into the other details because I know we have the other witnesses here. But much of this is contained in the details of our testimony. I would ask that you and others take a hard look at that, and see that this is all moved forward on behalf of the tribally controlled movement.

Thank you so much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Gipp follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. DAVID M. GIPP, PAST PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBER, AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM; PRESIDENT, UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE

UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE (UTTC)

United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) submits this statement in support of enacting into law a new Title V to the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act (Tribal College Act). We are very appreciative of this Committee's inclusion of us in the drafting and consultation process.

The new Title would authorize Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) funding for our institutions which do not receive funding under the Tribal College Act. It is our hope that an explicit authorization of BIE funding for UTTC and Navajo Technical College (NTC) will encourage the Administration to reverse its course of the past 6 years when no Bureau of Indian Affairs funding was requested for us. Having the two institutions included in an authorization for a Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Institutions program in the BIE will lessen the likelihood that our funding will be considered an earmark.

The Board of Directors of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium approved a resolution on March 23,2007 in support of enacting a new title to the Tribal College Act authorizing funding for UTTC and NTC provided that it would have no negative impact on funding the colleges currently receive under the Tribal College Act or other Acts. We are very appreciative of the support of our sister colleges.

Background. UTTC and NTC do not now receive funding under the Tribal College Act, but rather receive funding as separate and unrelated line items in the BIA (now BIE) budget. Funding for both schools is uncertain every year. In fact, the Administration has requested zero funds for both schools over the past 6 years. Although our Congressional delegations have persuaded Congress to put our funds back into budget, even this action is now coming under scrutiny because of the controversy about "earmark" appropriations. United Tribes Technical College has been a part of the Executive branch budget requests since 1969.

Under Titles I (24 tribal colleges) and II (Diné College) of the Tribal College Act, only one college per tribe may receive operating funds under that Act. UTTC is governed by a Board consisting of the Chairs of the five tribes located wholly or in part in North Dakota, and each tribe represented on our governing board has a tribal college that receives Tribal College Act funds. Thus, UTTC may not receive funds under the Tribal College Act. The same is true for NTC, as Diné College is the Navajo Nation recipient under the Act.

On March 30, 2007 we received a draft bill from the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs amending the Tribal College Act, including establishing a new Title V as mentioned above. *Our comments below will note where we are in agreement with the draft and where we recommend changes.*

Eligibility. We support the draft bill's provision (Section 502) making United Tribes Technical College and Navajo Technical College the only eligible institutions under Title V of the Tribal College Act and specifying that and that we must continue to meet the definition given the term "tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions" in Section 3 ofthe Carl Perkins Act (20 U.S.C. 2302).

Exempted From one College Per Tribe Provision. We support the draft bill's provision exempting Title V from the provision that allows funding for only one college under the Act. The bill does this by exempting Title V from certain provisions of the Tribal College Act. These exemptions are listed in Section 503(a) of the draft bill. This section says that the paragraph that contains the definition of "tribally controlled college" (Section 2(a)(4) of the TCCUAA), which also contains the statement that only one college per tribe may receive funding, does not apply to Title V.

Indian Self-Determination Act Contracts. We support Section 503(b) which provides that funding is to continue to be made available pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. UTTC has been administering funds

from the BIA under an ISDEAA grant since 1978. NTC is also now administering its funds under an ISDEAA contract.

Use the terms "Funds" or "Funding". We ask that the terms "grant" or "grants" in the draft bill be changed to "funds" or "funding" throughout Title V. Funds administered under ISDEAA contracts are not "grants", and even though the draft bill provides that the funds will be continued to be made available pursuant to the ISDEAA, we want it clarified that these funds are not "grants". Grants are far more limiting and do not generally bring with them contract support costs funding; whereas funds administered under an ISDEAA do bring with them funding for contract support costs.

Distribution of Funds. We support a distribution of funds that:

- Holds harmless the two schools at the higher of their FY 2006, 2007 or 2008 BIA funding levels. In other words, contingent upon appropriations, the schools could not be funded at an amount less than the amount for their base year (the higher of FY 2006, 2007 or 2008). This could mean that each institution uses a different base year, which is acceptable. It is likely that each institution's FY 2007 funding will be the same as its FY 2006 funding, although final FY 2007 allocations have not yet been made. The draft bill leaves open the year which would be considered the base year.
- Distributes appropriations above the "hold harmless" level of the two institutions combined according to the Indian Student Count formula used to distribute Section 117 Perkins Act grants. This formula was just enacted into law in 2006. For instance, if the hold harmless amount for both schools combined is $6 million, but the total appropriation is $7 million, then the $1 million above the hold harmless amount would be distributed according to the Indian Student Count formula. The draft bill would have the Secretary of Interior establish a new formula for distribution of funds that are in excess of the base amount—we do not favor the Secretary having this responsibility.

Justification for "hold harmless" language. Each institution has established a budget for its operations according to current and expected funding levels for the coming year. BIA funds are critical for core functions such as curricula development and hiring of instructors. Neither institution can afford to take a significant reduction in funding. Further, it is not unusual for Congress to enact "hold harmless" provisions when a funding methodology is changed—one current example is the hold harmless provision under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Justification for formula distribution of those funds in excess of the "hold harmless" amount. United Tribes Technical College and Navajo Technical College agreed to the Indian Student Count provision included in the 2006 reauthorization of the Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Under that formula every 12 credits taken by an Indian student is valued as one Indian Student Count. Each school is provided funds based upon a division of the total ISC for both institutions into the amount appropriated for the program.

A major reason why we reached an agreement on the formula for the ISC contained in the newly reauthorized Carl Perkins Act is that it is almost the same formula as set out in the Tribal College Act. Since we are now proposing to be authorized under a new title V of the Tribal College Act, it makes sense to utilize the Carl Perkins ISC formula, so similar to the Tribal College Act's ISC formula, for funds in excess of the "hold harmless" amount.

Justification for eliminating the discretion of the Secretary of Interior. The draft bill would require the Secretary of Interior to develop a formula for the distribution of the "excess" funds. As this Committee knows, the Secretary of Interior is the one who has regularly left NTC and UTTC out of the President's annual budget six times in a row. We have no reason to trust the Secretary's discretion. Further, the process of developing a formula for distribution could take a very long time and delay distribution of funds. It would further create great uncertainty about funding for the two institutions.

Since we already have a formula for fund distribution that works, and both parties understand how it works, we see no reason why the Secretary should have discretion to create a new formula or a new process for distribution of funds. The formula we have proposed is fair to both institutions and recognizes the needs of both institutions, to the extent Congress provides adequate funding.

A formula also has the advantage that it avoids the issue of "earmarks". Funding that is competitive or formula driven is not generally considered an "earmark", even by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

We also do not support the idea of the Secretary distributing funds utilizing information provided by the Government Accountability Office as has also been suggested (but it not in the draft bill). A GAO study of the "needs" (a subjective and

undefined term) of the two institutions could take years to complete—the request would go to the bottom of the long list of requests for reports. Even requests from Committee Chairs on reports of national significance do not happen quickly. In 2003 Finance Committee Chairman Grassley asked the GAO to study Indian participation in Medicare and Medicaid programs, a study that 4 years later is just now getting underway. Therefore, a GAO study is not a practical or efficient way to distribute core funding that is so vitally needed now by both institutions.

A study of tribal needs nationally regarding human resource capital relative to career and technical education. We feel strongly that there should be a study that focuses on the present human resource development needs of all Indian tribes in relation to career and technical education. Tribal governments, Federal agencies, and private entities are making plans to develop Indian Country, but not enough thought has gone into assessing the present tribal human resource capital—economic/business, social, political, cultural, nor what needs to be done to involve the Indian/Alaska Native population in guiding and benefiting from such development. Broad questions that could be assessed could include: (1) the status of the workforce infrastructure available to tribes; (2) workforce and infrastructure needs of tribes; (3) economic development opportunities that would expand tribal economies; (4) tribal education and job training needs. A study of this kind could go a long way toward helping tribal colleges meet the needs of the tribes they serve, point the way for new tribal colleges to be developed, and assist Congress to more effectively help meet the needs of tribes as they continue to develop their economies.

Thank you. We look forward to continuing with work with the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM (AIHEC)

Chairman Dorgan, Vice Chairman Thomas, and distinguished Members of the Committee, on behalf of this Nation's 34 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU), which comprise the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), I thank you for extending us the opportunity to testify. I am honored to be here.

My name is David Gipp, I am a Member of the Hunkpapa Lakota tribe and for the past 30 years I have served as the President at United Tribes Technical College, which is located near Bismarck, North Dakota and serves Indian students from over 75 federally recognized tribes across the Nation.

United Tribes began as a residential employment training program and was called United Tribes Employment Training Center. Today, UTTC offers over 30 Associate degree and certificate programs, with five degrees being offered through online delivery. The college employs over 330 faculty, staff and administrators and serves over 1,400 full- and part-time students.

The idea of tribally controlled institutions of higher education has spread rapidly throughout Indian Country, over the past 30 years. Today, despite decades of severe funding inequities and Federal budget cuts, there are 35 Tribal Colleges and Universities located in 14 states educating many thousands of full- and part-time students from over 250 federally recognized Indian tribes.

This morning, I would like to give you some background on the tribal college movement and to detail some specific issues and how they might be addressed during the 11Oth Congress reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) and the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act—or Tribal College Act.

I. Background: The Tribal College Movement

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU) are young, geographically isolated, and poor. Forty years ago there were no Tribal Colleges or Universities. Most TCU are located in areas of Indian Country that the Federal Government defines as extremely remote. We serve our communities in ways far beyond college level programming, and are often called beacons of hope for our people. We provide much needed high school completion (GED), basic remediation, job training, college preparatory courses, and adult education programs. We function as community centers, libraries, tribal archives, career and business centers, economic development centers, public meeting places, and elder and child care centers. In fact, an underlying goal of all TCU is to improve the lives of students through higher education and to move American Indians toward self-sufficiency. This goal is important to us because of the extreme poverty in which most American Indians live. In fact, three of the five poorest counties in America are home to TCU, where unemployment rates range from 50 to 75 percent.

We are the most poorly funded institutions of higher education in the country. And apart from the U.S. Military Academies and Howard and Gallaudet Univer-

sities, we are the only institutions of higher education whose basic operating budgets are funded—by legislative mandate—by the Federal Government.

Most of our institutions are located on Federal trust land. Therefore, states have no obligation to fund tribal colleges. Most states do not even provide funds for the non-Indian state-resident students who account for 20 percent of our enrollments. Yet, if these same students attended any other public institution in the state, the state would provide that institution with basic operating funds. Ironically, TCU are accredited by the same regional agencies that accredit state institutions.

Despite their strong support, our tribal governments are able to provide us with only modest financial support. Our tribes are not the handful of small and wealthy gaming tribes located near major urban areas; rather, they are some of the poorest governments in the Nation. Only a handful of tribal colleges currently receive any revenue from tribal gaming. Gaming is not a stable or viable funding source for TCU, nor should it be a factor when considering the funding of tribal colleges. And as you know, it is a very few casinos that are located in or near major urban areas that are realizing the vast majority of the highly publicized profits from Indian gaming.

Revenues from state run gaming operations far exceed revenues from Indian gaming. Although some form of gaming is legalized in almost every state, the Federal Government has not used the revenue generated from state run gaming to justify decreasing Federal funding to state operated colleges or universities. The standards that apply to states and state operated higher education institutions should apply to tribes and tribal colleges. Unfortunately, it appears that this is not the case.

II. 110th Congress Reauthorization of the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act and Higher Education Act

(A) Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act—Key Issues

Institutional Operations and Forward Funding: Despite trust responsibilities and treaty obligations resulting from the exchange of millions of acres of land, the Federal Government has not, over the years, considered funding of American Indian higher education a priority.

Since 1981, when the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act, or "Tribal College Act" was first funded the number of tribally chartered institutions funded under Title I of said Act has quadrupled and it is expected that three to five additional institutions will be eligible for Tribal College Act funding in the near future. In addition to the increasing number of tribal colleges, enrollments of full-time Indian students have grown over 300 percent.

Despite the much appreciated increases that Congress has appropriated over the last several years, Tribal Colleges and Universities are chronically under-funded. Today, 26 years after the Act was first funded, the TCU are receiving $5001 per Indian student, just 80 percent of their authorized level. And if you factor in inflation, the buying power of this appropriation is *$1,337 LESS per Indian student* than it was in the initial FY 1981 appropriation, which was $2,831 per Indian student.

Clearly, an increase in the per Indian student authorized level is warranted and necessary and adjusting the new level to annual inflation is a way to keep the authority level from becoming a false measure of adequate funding.

On the face of it, the holdups due to impasses and the resulting continuing resolutions or even delays in the Department's distribution of operating funds after Congress makes them available, might seem easily remedied. However, the consequences have a cumulative effect that create even greater financial difficulties that grow exponentially, the longer the payments are left undistributed.

The stop gap measures, such as short term loans, that must be employed to keep tribal colleges operating only serve to further exacerbate the tenuous financial circumstances under which these institutions are continually forced to operate. The situations created by budget impasses or Department delays lead to strained relations with banking institutions and a lack of credibility with businesses in the colleges' respective communities. It creates a need to identify emergency lines of credit to secure daily operational cash-flow. These lines of credit come with burdensome interest rates that immediately reduce the appropriated level of funding included in the final enacted bill.

Over the past several years, funding has not been available until well after October 1 of the relevant fiscal year. In FY06, although the Interior appropriations bill was signed into law in August, TCU did not receive their operating funds until late November and December, several months into the academic year. This year, due to the protracted FY07 appropriations process, TCU did not receive operating funds until February or March—4 to 5 months into the fiscal year and 6 months after our academic year begins. Delayed appropriations and less than timely distribution of funds, which are becoming the regular order, make it difficult to properly plan and

project operation funding needs, hamstring long-range strategic planning, and force heavier reliance on grants and soft-money funding, which is a recurring concern of the accrediting agencies. In short, TCU are forced into a credibility crisis with their faculty, staff, communities, and students. Forward funding of our institutional operations would go a long way to breaking this unfortunate cycle.

Recommendation:

- *Increase the Authorized Institutional Operations Funding Level:* Tribal Colleges and Universities request that the Committee include an increase to the per Indian student authorized level for operations to "$8,000 adjusted annually for inflation," in its bill regarding the reauthorization of the Tribal College Act.
- *Forward Funding:* No additional language is needed as the authority already exists in the Tribal College Act to forward fund the institutional operations of eligible TCU. Tribal Colleges and Universities request that the Committee recommend that the Appropriations Committee and the Administration work to secure the one time appropriation needed to achieve forward funding in Fiscal Year 2009.

Authorizing BIE funding for Tribally Controlled Post-secondary Career and Technical Institutions: Navajo Technical College and United Tribes Technical College: United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) and Navajo Technical College (NTC) very much appreciate this Committee's including a Title V to the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act during the reauthorization of said Act. The new Title would authorize Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) funding for our institutions. By establishing this authorization for the Tribally Controlled Post-secondary Career and Technical Institutions in the BIE it will lessen the likelihood that their funding will be considered an earmark, and may reverse the trend of the past 6 years of eliminating funding for our institutions in the President's annual budget.

The Board of Directors of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium approved a resolution on March 23, 2007 supporting the inclusion of a new title to the Tribal College Act to authorize institutional operating funds for UTTC and NTC provided that it would have no negative impact on funding of any tribal colleges currently receiving institutional operating funds from the Department of the Interior.

Under Titles I (24 tribal colleges) and II (Diné College) of the Tribal College Act each tribe may charter only one college to receive operating funds under the Act. UTTC is governed by a Board consisting of the Chairs of the five tribes located wholly or in part in North Dakota and each tribe represented on our governing board has a tribal college that receives funds under Title I of the Tribal College Act. It is for this reason that UTTC may not receive funds under the Tribal College Act. The same is true for NTC, as Diné College, which is chartered by the Navajo Nation, receives funds under Title II of the Act.

Recommendation:

- *Authorization for Tribally Controlled Post-secondary Career and Technical Institutions:* The Board of Directors of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium approved a resolution on March 23, 2007 supporting the inclusion of a new title to the Tribal College Act to authorize institutional operating funds for UTTC and NTC provided that it would have no negative impact on funding the tribal colleges currently receiving institutional operating funds from the Department of the Interior. Tribal Colleges and Universities urge the Committee to work with the presidents of our two affected institutions in determining the details of language and implementation of the proposed new title.

(B) Higher Education Act—Key Issues

Department of Education—HEA Title III–A section 316: Title III–A of the Higher Education Act supports minority and other institutions that enroll large proportions of financially disadvantaged students and have low per-student expenditures. Tribal colleges clearly fit this definition. TCU fulfill a vital role by providing access to quality higher education programs to some of the most impoverished areas of the country. Their programs are specifically designed to focus on the critical, unmet needs of their American Indian students and communities, in order to effectively prepare their students for the workforce of the 21st Century. A clear goal of the Title III program is to improve the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible institutions, in order to increase their self-sufficiency and strengthen their capacity to make a substantial contribution to the higher education resources of the Nation.

TCU are the youngest and least developed institutions of higher education in the Nation. As such, they are the most in need of these funds yet, our funding level increases lag behind other programs, and we must struggle to submit competitive

applications under the arduous requirements and volume of Title III Part A grants for the funds that are available. Many higher education institutions spend thousands of dollars on grant application preparation and submission. This is simply not an option for TCU. In addition, the pool of eligible applicants for the TCU program is small and although new TCU are emerging, the pool is expected to remain below 45 institutions for the foreseeable future. Creating a formula funded program would result in a win-win situation. Current applications submitted for Title III Part A competitive grants must have each of the required areas individually judged by application reviewers, by converting the TCU program to formula funding considerable administrative time and cost savings could be realized by the Federal Government. For these reasons, the Department of Education supports formula funding for the Tribal College Title III development grants program.

Recommendation:

- *Expand and increase authority for the Tribal Colleges and Universities' Title III–A Developing Institutions Program*—The Tribal Colleges and Universities request that the Committee include the language contained in Sec. 303 of S. 1614, reported from the Senate HELP Committee in the 109th Congress to formula fund the Tribal Colleges' 5-year developing institutions grants and also retain the critically needed construction grants that are competitively awarded on an annual basis, in its bill or any recommendations sent to the Senate HELP Committee regarding the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

Proposed Native American Serving, Non-Tribal Institutions Program: In the 109th Congress, the Senate bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act included a new Title III program for "Native American-Serving, Non-Tribal Institutions". Tribal colleges have serious concerns regarding this proposal—but the underlying issue is one of equity.

Tribal Colleges and Universities have a special relationship with the Federal Government, which is based on our status as extensions of the federally recognized Indian tribes that charter us. Our tribes have binding treaties with the U.S. Government that include certain responsibilities, including education, in exchange for millions of acres of land. The reason the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act exists—and resources are allocated to tribally controlled colleges and universities—is because of these treaties and the Federal trust responsibility. In short, this is solely a *political,* and not race-based, distinction. Funding of tribal colleges and universities raises *no* affirmative action issues. This Native American Serving, Non-Tribal Institutions proposal, however, does.

Additionally, the vast majority of tribal colleges has open enrollment policies. Approximately 20 percent of our enrollments are non-Indian students and these students receive the same education opportunities as enrolled tribal members. However, the tribal colleges and universities cannot include anyone who is not an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe in their student count that is used to determine their institution's operating budget. There are no parameters for determining Native American students under the proposed American Indian Serving Institutions. Native American students would simply be determined by self-reporting, there is no definition of parameters to determine what constitutes a "Native American".

Tribal colleges receive little, or as in many cases no, institutional operating funds from the state for either the Indian or non-Indian state residents who attend a tribal college or university. State supported institutions that would be eligible to receive funding under this proposed Native American Serving Institution Title III program already count their American Indian students, as well as non-Indian state residents, when tallying their institution's student count for determining their allocation of funds from the state.

Further, there is no practical way of separating out funds going to improve education opportunities for Native Americans within these state institutions. As noted earlier, these institutions already receive funding for the education of their Native American students. This program would just result in creating a source of additional funds for state supported institutions to increase their basic operating and program budgets—without any means for measuring its effect on Native American students.

Recommendation:

- *Proposed Title III–A Native American Serving, Non-Tribal Institutions Program:* As a matter of equity and for the reasons noted earlier in this statement, the Tribal Colleges and Universities respectfully request that the Committee on Senate Indian Affairs oppose the establishment of a new Title III–A program for so-called Native American Serving, non-Tribal Institutions.

III. Conclusion

Tribal Colleges and Universities bring high quality, culturally relevant higher education opportunities to thousands of American Indians. The modest Federal investment in the TCU has paid great dividends in terms of employment, education, and economic development. Continuation of this investment makes sound moral and fiscal sense. Tribal colleges need stable funding sources and competent agency administration of our various programs to sustain and grow those programs and achieve our missions.

We greatly appreciate the long standing support of this distinguished Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to present our views and recommendations to help achieve equality in higher education and economic opportunities in Indian Country through the Nation's Tribal Colleges and Universities.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Gipp, thank you very much.

I should just mention that the question of funding the United Tribes, for example, is not solely within the discretion of the Department of the Interior or the Secretary of the Interior. The Congress has weighed in on that each year that this President has left it out of the budget.

But you are quite correct that you were always a part of the budget until this Administration. Congress has, as you know, decided this Administration is wrong and has continued that funding. But I think the authorization request is a reasonable request that we should proceed on.

Dr. GIPP. I deeply appreciate the bipartisan effort by the Congress, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Elmer Guy is a board member of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, and president of the Navajo Technical College in Crownpoint, NM. Mr. Guy, thank you for being with us.

STATEMENT OF ELMER J. GUY, PRESIDENT, NAVAJO TECHNICAL COLLEGE; BOARD MEMBER, AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

Mr. GUY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee.

I am here today in partnership with Dr. Gipp from United Tribes Technical College, in order to ask for support for the new title V section of the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Act of 1978. This new title will authorize funds to tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions.

Navajo Tech was founded in the largest American Indian Nation, the great Navajo Nation, to help turn a tragedy into educational success. Navajo Tech has had a distinguished history in Indian education. Part of the challenge is the realization of the depth of the tragedy of Indian education in 1968. Back in 1969, we began to discover how to use education and training as a tool to address the immediate needs of unemployed populations.

In 1979, the Navajo Skills Center was founded to meet that critical need. Unemployed Navajo citizens not only mastered vocational and technical skills, but they found jobs. In 1985, I response to the limited offerings by the Navajo Skills Center, this school became Crownpoint Institute of Technology. The Institute began to expand its program in order to offer associate degrees at that time, and responded to the national trends as they relate to career technical education.

While Navajo Tech responded positively to the call for the Nation's colleges and universities to begin working toward programs that would bolster science, technology, engineering, math and competitive needs of the 21st century by developing impressive associate programs, it continued to build programs like culinary arts, nursing assistants, automotive and so forth, to keep with the knowledge revolution and career fields and insure that job certificate degree priorities are aligned to achieve high placement rates.

In 2005, Navajo Technical College was accredited by the Higher Learning Commission as a higher education institute. Navajo Tech has maintained retention rates over time that exceed 60 percent of the student population using cohort analysis, besting the national community retention rate below 50 percent. This does not mean that Navajo Tech comes close to meeting the Navajo people's higher education needs. The 2000 census acknowledges a Navajo population at 225,298. On trust land alone, we have 106,432 citizens that are over age 18 and needing higher education.

In spite of the success by Navajo Tech, the BIA in 2000 began to zero out the budget for critically needed operational funds. This is part of the operational funding that receives the Indian Self-Determination Act contracts. Both colleges also receive funding from Department of Education funding under the Carl D. Perkins Act.

But through the wisdom of Congress and the deeply appreciated help of this Committee, and Senators and Representatives from our home States, the BIA decision has been reversed every year since then, thus keeping both Navajo Tech and United Tribes Technical College alive and providing services to students.

The truth is that, Members of the Committee, Navajo Tech needs to stabilize its funding base. Without BIA and Carl Perkins funding, in spite of the discretionary target funding the college is eligible to apply for, Navajo Tech and UTTC cannot provide even the modest services that it now provides to students of the United States.

We especially want to support the formula for funding between Navajo Tech and UTTC that will hold harmless that two schools at the higher of their 2006, 2007, or 2008 funding levels. We want to ensure that the two schools will not be funded at an amount less than the amount of their base year based on congressional appropriations, and to distribute appropriations above the hold harmless level of the two institutions combined, according to the Indian student formula used to distribute Section 117 Carl Perkins Act grants.

Ensure that the legislation passed includes a provision which provides that funding is continued to be made available pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination Education Assistance Act. Ensure that the two colleges will continue to receive the base funding that they need through sources from BIE and Perkins Act funding.

Recognize that the Navajo Nation is the largest American Indian Nation in the Country, with by far the largest population base, and should not be therefore limited to only one institution of higher learning to serve its people. In comparison, Members of the Committee, the Navajo Nation is larger than West Virginia and other smaller States like Connecticut and Rhode Island, and they are not limited to one college.

Ensure that there is authorization for forward funding, as well as to allow both colleges to use non-Federal match, and to use their funds as the non-Federal match.

Therefore, the greatest respect for the Members of this Committee, which number among Navajo Tech's friends, we ask that you support the new title V language before you so that we can end the uncertainty and provide stability to our colleges. We are hoping that you will, on a bipartisan basis, help us to live up to our educational responsibility to current Navajo students, future students, and even unborn students of the future.

The job identified in 1969 is still with us today. We need to change the tragedy of Indian education into a success of Indian education. The United States needs us to succeed since our human resources are always our greatest asset. If we succeed, all of us serve the American people well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Guy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELMER J. GUY, PRESIDENT, NAVAJO TECHNICAL COLLEGE; BOARD MEMBER, AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

Honorable Members of the Committee on Indian Affairs. My name is Elmer J. Guy, President of Navajo Technical College (Navajo Tech) that has two campuses on the Navajo Nation in Crownpoint, New Mexico and Chinle, Arizona. I am here today in partnership with Dr. David Gipp, the President of United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) located in Bismarck, North Dakota, in order to ask for support for a new Title V section to the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Act of 1978 (25 USC 1801, et seq.). This new title will authorize funds to tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions.

Navajo Tech, like UTTC, has had a distinguished history in Indian higher education. In the famous 1969 report by the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare of the U.S. Senate, made by its Special Subcommittee on Indian Education, Indian education throughout the United States was found to be "a National Tragedy—a National Challenge." The stark reality painted by the statistical and policy analysis in that report shocked the Nation at that time. U.S. education policy toward American Indian people had not improved their lives and prospects for a better future. It had, instead, taken resources from the national treasury in a way that perpetuated a historical tragedy of major proportions.

I will let the able Dr. Gipp speak for his institution, of course. He is one of the most distinguished American Indian educators in the Nation and has been so for a long period of time. But Navajo Tech was founded on the largest American Indian Nation, the great Navajo Nation, in the U.S. to help turn a tragedy into educational success.

Part of the challenge in the wake of the realization of the depth of the tragedy of Indian education in 1969 was to begin to discover how to use education and training as a tool to address the immediate needs of an unemployed population. In 1979 the Navajo Skill Center was founded to meet that critical need. Through the dedicated work of Navajo education leaders at that time, the Skill Center was a success. Unemployed Navajo citizens not only mastered vocational and technical skills, but they found jobs.

With a Navajo population of the time at over 150,000 people, this success was limited, however. There were a lot of reasons for this. Funding was limited; too few training and educational programs were available; student and trainee interests were broader than the curriculum; jobs in the Nation were limited and highly competitive; job requirements became more demanding as the national economy demanded higher levels of education, and dreams among students and Navajo educators were larger than the Navajo Skills Center structure could contain.

In 1985, in response to these new challenges, the Skills Center became the Crownpoint Institute of Technology. A new era was begun. The Institute began to expand its programming in order to offer associate degrees. It began to pay close attention to national trends as they related to careers and technical education. And, was previously true, it began to succeed as it developed programs to meet the challenges present during the late 1980s and 1990s.

I am telling this history to make two points: (1) That Navajo Technical College has played a vital role in the effort by the U.S. Senate and government of the United States to address problems in Indian education that stretch back into U.S. history and (2) that, although it has not managed to meet even one half percent of the technical and career needs on the Navajo people living in New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah, it has been making slow progress on national education goals as they relate to American Indian people.

While Navajo Tech was the Crownpoint Institute of Technology it managed a number of significant achievements. It responded positively to the call for the Nation's colleges and universities to begin working toward programs that would bolster the science, technology, engineering, and math competitive needs of the 21st century by developing impressive associate degree programs. It continued building its strengths in programs like culinary arts and automotive technology, sometimes keeping up with the knowledge revolution in career fields and sometimes ensuring that jobs, certificate, and degree priorities were aligned to achieve high job placement rates.

In 2005 Crownpoint Institute of Technology became Navajo Technical College, in part because of the expansion of services into the Arizona side of the Nation. Navajo Tech has maintained retention rates over time that exceed 60 percent of the student population using cohort analysis, besting a national community college retention rate of a little over 50 percent. It became a land grant institution in partnership with other tribal colleges in 1994. In 2005 it became fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association.

This does not mean that Dine College, the other tribal college on the Navajo Nation and Navajo Tech are coming close to meeting the Navajo people's higher education needs—although both institutions of higher learning provide absolutely vital eduacational services to the Navajo people. U.S. Census acknowledges a total of Navajo population of 225,298. On trust land alone, 106,432 Navajo citizens are age 18 and over. This population is spread throughout a 17,500,000 acre reservation (26,897 square miles) extending into three states. The Navajo reservation is 2,810 square miles larger than the State of West Virginia. The median Native American population age is 27.4 years, 8 years younger than the median age for mainstream America. Approximately 10,000 Navajo students graduate from area high schools each year. Dropout rates from high school are as high as they are in the most challenging urban schools. Large percentages of those Navajo students who graduate lack basic reading, writing, and math skills. Navajo Tech alone only serves a little over 500 full-time equivalency students where it should be serving thousands if persistent poverty on the Navajo Nation is going to be ended before the 21st century ends.

In spite of the success realized by Navajo Tech, and the needs that I just brushed over with the lightest of touches—I will be glad to provide the Committee or staffers with more extensive statistics if that will be useful to your deliberations, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in 2002 began to zero out the budget for critically needed operational funds, the authorization for appropriations that enables Navajo tech is Pub.L. 84–959, "Vocational Training for Adult Indians." This is part of the operational funding that Navajo Tech receives under the Indian Self-Determination Act Contract. Both colleges also receive U.S. Department of Education Funding under Section 117 of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act as part of its operational funding.

Through the wisdom of Congress and the deeply appreciated help of this Committee and the Senators and Representatives from our home states, the BIA decision has been reversed every year since then, thus keeping both Navajo Tech and UTTC alive and providing services to their students. But the uncertainty and stress on communities, which read about the yearly drama in area newspapers and hear about it on area media, students, faculty, and staff damages Navajo Tech every single year. "Will Navajo Tech survive another year or not?" People say. "What's wrong with the college if the Bureau of Indian Affairs wants to shut it down?" They say. Education is about the future, and when the future is clouded and troubles seem to always verge on creating disaster, then planning efforts go awry, key professionals look for other jobs, students question if they should make a decision that is in their best interest, and keeping everyday tasks going gets harder.

The truth is that Navajo Tech needs to stabilize its funding base. Without BIA and Carl Perkins funding, in spite of the discretionary and targeted funding the college is eligible to apply for, Navajo Tech cannot provided even the modest services that it now provides to the Navajo Nation and the people of the United States. We especially want to support the formula for funding between Navajo Tech and UTTC that will:

- Hold harmless the two schools at the higher of their 2006 or 2007 funding levels. We want to ensure that the two schools will not be funded at an amount less than the amount for their base year based upon Congressional appropriations.
- Distribute appropriations above the "hold harmless" level of the two institutions combined according to the Indian Student Count Formula used to distribute Section 117 Perkins Act grants.
- Ensure that the legislation passed includes a provision which provides that funding is continued to be made available pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistant Act.
- Ensure that the two colleges will continue to receive the base funding they need from their sources of BIA and Perkins Act funding.
- Recognize that the Navajo Nation is largest American Indian nation in the country with by far the largest population base and should not therefore be limited to only one institution of higher learning to serve its people.

Therefore, with the greatest of respect for the Members of this Committee, which number among Navajo Tech's greatest friends, we ask that you support the new Title V language before you so that we can end the uncertainty and provide stability to our college. We are hoping that you will, on a bi-partisan basis, help us to live up to our educational responsibility to current Navajo students, future students, and even unborn students of the future. The job identified in 1969 is still with us. We need to change the tragedy of Indian education into the success of Indian education. The United States needs us to succeed since our human resources are always our greatest asset. If we succeed all of us serve the American people well.

A further truth is that both Navajo Tech and UTTC are making strides in spite of the institutional stress and challenges we face because of the zeroing out of BIA funding every year. Again, I will let Dr. Gipp speak for his institution, but at Navajo Tech our enrollment is increasing. Our technology education program has become a world class program. It is currently in the process of developing an initiative called Internet to the Hogan that is using science and technology research in areas like high speed wireless connectivity and supercomputing and using those technologies to end the digital divide on the Navajo Nation. The Congress of the United States provided the funds through the National Science Foundation and other Federal agencies to make the work we are doing possible. Navajo students are learning world class skills as a result of this project, and some of our graduates, both working at the college and elsewhere, are becoming leaders in research, education, and the entrepreneurial use of technology.

We are currently working hard with the Superintendent of Navajo Education, Dr. Tommy Lewis, to improve K–20 student performance in pre-college science, technology, engineering, and math skills, working on an answer to the problem of underperforming high school students. We are extending our service area, strengthening curriculum and increasing academic rigor in fields as diverse as nursing, automotive repair, electrical trades, and alternative energy. Title V will not provide solutions to all of the challenges that still must be overcome to end the national tragedy in Indian education that we have fought to overcome since 1969. More resources, fresh ideas, an entrepreneurial drive for excellence, and the kind of determination present in the students, staff, faculty, and administrators at Navajo Tech will all be needed. But the passage of this legislation will be an important step toward Navajo Tech's long-term future.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Guy, thank you very much for being with us today.

Next, we will hear from Jamie Merisotis, President of the Institute for Higher Education Policy in Washington, DC. Mr. Merisotis, thank you for being with us.

STATEMENT OF JAMIE P. MERISOTIS, PRESIDENT, INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY

Mr. MERISOTIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Improving access to higher education continues to be one of the most important contributions that the Federal Government can make to our national well being. For many American Indians, the path of educational attainment is one of many journeys reflecting

the complex challenges that face people who have been underserved by America's educational system for more than two centuries.

A combination of historical, economic, social and demographic forces have shaped the educational challenges and constraints that American Indians face. Today, almost 28 percent of American Indians aged 25 and over have not graduated from high school, compared with the national average of 15 percent. And only 42 percent of American Indians pursue any form of higher education; 13 percent of whom attain a bachelor's degree or higher, half the national average. More than one-third of all American Indian students are 30 years or older, which puts them at risk for dropping out prior to earning a degree. At tribal colleges, entering students have family incomes that average less than $14,000, 27 percent below the Federal poverty threshold.

Despite these significant obstacles, we know that investing in higher education results in widespread dramatic benefits for both individuals and the Nation as a whole. For example, American Indians with a bachelor's degree or higher earn almost four times as much as those who did not graduate from high school, and more than twice as much as those who hold a high school diploma. Participation in Federal welfare programs is there times less for those with a college education than for those who graduated from high school. Only about one-third of American Indian students who did not graduate from high school voted in the November 2004 election, compared to over half of those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Tribal colleges play an important role in workforce development and skills, and they emphasize areas that are of particular importance to the development of reservation communities, such as health services, primary and secondary education, and rural farm and business development. They offer a variety of social services for students and community members, such as family life and parenting courses, and domestic and community violence prevention programs.

The very presence of tribal colleges on reservations encourages even further pursuit of post-secondary education, as evidenced by the fact that one-half of tribal college graduates continue their education.

So investment in higher education through tribal colleges isn't just a nice thing to do for American Indians. It is a necessary step that is required to allow these colleges to serve the growing numbers of students who will contribute in significant ways to their communities and to our Nation.

I urge the Committee, therefore, to focus on the following key Federal policy priorities. First, increase funding for the operating expenses of tribal colleges and increase the level authorized under the Tribal College Act. The current act allocates funding through a formula based on the number of Indian students enrolled. No funds are distributed for non-Indian students, who make up 20 percent of total enrollment at these schools. In 2006, as prior witnesses pointed out, total funding per American Indian student was $5,001. Appropriations have never reached the authorized level of $6,000, and in fact have decreased by almost 30 percent after infla-

tion. Future funding increases should be tied to inflation to ensure that student support does not decline.

Second, improve the capacity of tribal colleges to serve students by increasing support for facilities and critical infrastructure needs. While many mainstream colleges and universities have benefited enormously from infrastructure support from the Federal Government, most that have received such support were created prior to the establishment of the first tribal college. Congress can correct this inequity by establishing a facilities and infrastructure equity plan to tribal colleges that provides a level of support that is comparable on a per-student basis to the sums available to other land grant institutions.

Third, enhance the development of tribal colleges through increasing support under Title III of the Higher Education Act. Inexplicably, the President's 2008 budget proposed slashing funds for tribal colleges under title III by more than 20 percent, an unprecedented cut. Given the enormous educational needs served by the tribal colleges, this must not stand. I urge the Committee to make title III funding for tribal colleges formula-based so that institutions do not have to go through the complex and time consuming task of developing detailed competitive proposals. I also recommend that the authorized level be increased to at least $40 million, and that the Committee work with appropriators to fund this section at its authorized level.

These and other strategies targeted at tribal colleges and universities must be combined with broader Federal policies to assist low income educationally disadvantaged students. Increasing support for Pell Grants, the Federal TRIO Programs, and programs that are aimed at building the high order workforce skills of our Nation are essential to combat the challenges of limited college access and success for our Nation's growing emerging majority populations.

As one of the main drivers of economic and social development for all American Indian communities, tribal colleges and universities are critical to the future success of these communities. I hope that you will continue the Committee's bipartisan history of support for tribal colleges, and act without delay to make these investments that are so critical to the future prosperity and security of American Indian communities. In so doing, our Nation will be strengthened and sustained for many generations to come.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Merisotis follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMIE P. MERISOTIS, PRESIDENT, INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY*

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before the Committee regarding the important topic of Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU).

The 110th Congress faces the ongoing challenge of promoting access to higher education for all Americans who have the interest and ability to attend college. Improving access to higher education continues to be one of the most important contributions that the Federal Government can make to our national well-being. For

*The Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) is an independent, nonprofit organization that is dedicated to access and success in postsecondary education around the world. Established in 1993, IHEP uses unique research and innovative programs to inform key decision makers who shape public policy and support economic and social development. The Institute's work addresses an array of issues in higher education, ranging from higher education financing to technology-based learning to quality assurance to minority-serving institutions.

many American Indians, the path of educational attainment is one of many journeys, reflecting the complex challenges that face people who have been underserved by America's educational system for more than two centuries. That path may take students on an array of journeys through the postsecondary educational system: Tribal Colleges and Universities; mainstream institutions of higher education; adult education programs; associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees; outreach and support programs; financial aid programs; and many others. Yet for many Native people, those journeys represent the best and most important opportunities available for cultural preservation and growth, social mobility, and economic prosperity.

Today I will discuss some of the evidence that has been amassed about why investment in Native people matters to us as a society, and why the specific investment in Tribal Colleges and Universities brings enormous benefits both individually and collectively to Native people and communities. I also will discuss some of the most important strategies that you can pursue at the Federal level to make this investment pay off in economic, social, and cultural terms.

The Institute for Higher Education Policy's acclaimed recent national report *The Path of Many Journeys: The Benefits of Higher Education for Native People and Communities* (made possible through the generous support of USA Funds, in collaboration with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium and the American Indian College Fund) has been provided in advance to the Committee. The report points out that a combination of historical, economic, social, demographic, and educational forces have shaped the challenges and constraints that American Indians face.

Historical forces: For decades U.S. Federal policy toward Indian tribes was made without knowledge or consideration of the values of Native people themselves. In addition, educational curricula and teaching came from a Eurocentric-White perspective and completely neglected any mention of tribal ways of life.

Economic and social forces: American Indians, especially those who live on reservations, are among the poorest groups in the country. Approximately 26 percent of the American Indian/Alaska Native population lives below the official poverty level, compared with 12 percent of the total population. Factors such as geographic isolation, limited opportunities for upward mobility in rural areas and on reservations, and low labor force participation rates contribute to a continuous poverty cycle among American Indians. This poverty is often accompanied by a range of social problems—injuries and violence, depression, substance abuse, inadequate health care and prenatal health care, unhealthy or insufficient diets, and high rates of diabetes—that can greatly affect the ability and desire to pursue education.

Demographic forces: The American Indian population has experienced tremendous growth, from 237,000 in 1900 to 4.3 million in 2000. An estimated 33 percent of this population is under the age of 18, compared with 26 percent of the total U.S. population. American Indians reside primarily in the Western part of the United States: 48 percent, compared with 22 percent of the total U.S. population. Currently, more than a third of American Indians live on reservations or in other American Indian Areas, with the remainder living in other communities. American Indians tend to be more rural, geographically isolated, and younger than the U.S. population as a whole.

Educational forces: American Indian college enrollment more than doubled, from 76,100 in 1976 to 165,900 in 2002. An important reason for that growth was the advent of the Tribal College and University movement, which began in the late 1960s and has grown at an impressive rate over a nearly 40 year period. However, American Indians continue to have much lower educational attainment rates than persons from other racial/ethnic backgrounds. Almost 28 percent of American Indians age 25 and over in 2004 had not graduated from high school, compared with the national average of 15 percent. Further, only 42 percent of American Indians pursued any form of higher education and 13 percent attained a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 53 percent and 28 percent nationally.

In addition, more than a third of all American Indian students are 30 years or older, which puts them at risk for dropping out prior to earning a degree. Most (65 percent) are financially independent, compared to a national average of 50 percent. At TCU, entering students have family incomes that average $13,998, or 27 percent below the poverty threshold.

Despite the significant obstacles that confront American Indians, we know that investing in higher education results in widespread, dramatic benefits to both individuals and the Nation as a whole, including higher rates of employment, less reliance on public assistance, increased levels of health, and a greater sense of civic responsibility. Figure 1 details some of the many benefits that result from such investments. For example, American Indians with a bachelor's degree or higher earn almost four times as much as those who did not graduate from high school, and more

than twice as much as those who hold a high school diploma. Further, the more education that is attained, the less likely it is for individuals to rely on public assistance programs. Participation in Federal welfare programs is three times higher for those with a high school degree compared to individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher.

A number of social benefits also correlate with postsecondary education attainment. For example, 88 percent of American Indians with a bachelor's degree or higher said they were in "excellent, very good, or good" health, compared with 73 percent of those without a high school diploma. Only about a third of American Indians who did not graduate from high school voted in the November 2004 Presidential election, compared with over half of those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Figure 1: Benefits resulting from higher education in general and from TCU on reservations

	Private	Public	Particular to Reservations
Economic	Higher Salaries and Benefits	Increased Tax Revenues	Workforce and Skills Development
	Employment	Greater Productivity	Greater Opportunities for Leadership and Small Businesses
	Higher Savings Levels	Increased Consumption	Economic Growth and Development
	Improved Working Conditions	Increased Workforce Flexibility	Employment for Graduates on Reservations
	Personal/Professional Mobility	Decreased Reliance on Government Financial Support	Agriculture and Land Development
Social	Improved Health/Life Expectancy	Reduced Crime Rates	Mitigation of Social Problems
	Improved Quality of life for Offspring	lncreased Charitable Giving/Community Service	Centers for Preservation of Culture, Language and Traditions
	Better Consumer Decision Making	Increased Quality of Civic Life	Provision of Further Educational Opportunities
	Increased Personal Status	Social Cohesion/Appreciation of Diversity	Technology Transfer
	More Hobbies and Leisure Activities	Improved Ability to Adapt and Use Technology	Community Programs

TCU and other nearby colleges contribute to the economic development of reservations. Despite persistent unemployment in reservation communities, graduates from TCU are employed at encouraging levels—for example, in one survey, 60 percent of alumni were employed outside the home, in the military, or self-employed. TCU also play an important role in workforce and skills development, and they emphasize areas that are of particular importance to the development of reservation communities, such as health services, primary and secondary education, and rural farm and business development.

Students at TCU, as well as the colleges themselves, contribute to the social health of reservation communities. The goals and activities of the colleges and their students translate into direct benefits to communities, such as the provision of social services, the preservation of language and tradition, and the encouragement of educational opportunities. TCU offer a variety of social services for students and community members, such as family life and parenting courses and domestic and community violence prevention programs. In addition, the very presence of TCU and college graduates on reservations encourages postsecondary educational attainment in these communities. About one-half of TCU graduates continue their education, and of those, over 86 percent pursue a bachelor's degree.

Thus, investment in Native American higher education through TCU and other postsecondary institutions is not just a nice thing to do for American Indians. It is a necessary step that is required to allow TCU to serve the growing numbers of students who will contribute in significant ways to their communities and to our Nation.

I therefore urge the Committee to focus on the following key Federal policy priorities that will greatly improve the postsecondary educational prospects of American Indians.

Recommendations

Increase funding for the operating expenses of Tribal Colleges and Universities and increase the level authorized under the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978 (TCCUAA).

TCU are in a unique funding situation. States have no obligation to provide funding for TCU because of their location on Federal trust territory. At the same time, the Federal trust territory status prevents the levying of local property taxes, which are often used to support community colleges elsewhere in the United States. Thus, the main source of funding for the TCU is the U.S. Government. This puts TCU in a unique category of institutions that includes only the U.S. military academies, Howard University, and Gallaudet University. According to treaty obligations and the trust responsibility between the sovereign Indian tribes and nations and the United States, the Federal Government is bound to provide funding for American Indian tribes for a variety of programs, including higher education.

The TCCUAA currently allocates funding to 24 of the TCU through a formula based on the number of Indian students enrolled (called the Indian Student Count or ISC). No funds are distributed for non-Indian students, who make up 20 percent of total enrollments at these schools. In 2006, the total funding per American Indian student provided under TCCUAA was $5,001. Appropriations have never reached the authorized level of $6,000 per student. Despite increases in total appropriations, funding per Indian student has increased only slightly since 1981 (by only $1,616 over a 26 year period) and, in fact, has decreased by almost 30 percent when inflation is considered. Future funding increases should be tied to inflation to ensure that support for students at TCU does not decline and therefore negatively impact the ability of the colleges to effectively serve American Indian students.

Improve the capacity of TCU to serve students by increasing support for facilities and critical infrastructure needs.

In 1994, 29 TCU were awarded land-grant status in Federal legislation. As land-grant institutions, these TCU have the right to receive resources that can be invested in additional faculty or equipment to conduct agricultural research, either independently or in collaboration with 4-year institutions. The 1996 White House Executive Order on Tribal Colleges and Universities aims to more fully integrate the colleges into Federal programs and reaffirms their important role in reservation development by directing all Federal departments and agencies to increase their financial support to the colleges. However, only modest sums that have been invested in TCU have been allocated for facilities construction and improvement. While many mainstream colleges and universities have benefited enormously from infrastructure support from the Federal Government, most that have received such support were created prior to the establishment of the first TCU. Congress can correct this inequity by establishing a facilities and infrastructure equity plan for TCU that provides a level of support that is comparable on a per-student basis to the sums available to the other land-grant institutions.

Enhance the development of TCU to better serve students through increased support under Title III of the Higher Education Act.

Part A, Section 316 of the Higher Education Act provides vital services to the growing number of TCU and the students they serve. These funds are used to support basic enhancements to curriculum, faculty development, and some infrastructure costs. Inexplicably, the President's 2008 Budget proposed slashing funds for TCU under Title III by more than 20 percent—an unprecedented cut. Title III represents an important opportunity for TCU to assist in their academic development. This funding is similar in scope to funds made available to other institutions with low average revenues, including many mainstream two- and 4-year colleges as well as Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Only funding for TCU was cut under Title III in the President's Budget (funding for other developing institutions was level funded and also disappointing). I urge the Committee to focus on two key issues to aid in institutional development at TCU under Title III. First, make funding for TCU under Section 316 formula-based so that institutions do not have to go through the complex and time-consuming task of developing detailed competitive proposals. All TCU have major development needs and should be recognized with support based on their FTE enrollments. Second, increase the authorization level for Section 316 funds to at least $40 million

and use the Committee's leverage with appropriators to fund this section at its authorized level.

These and other strategies targeted at the unique circumstances of Tribal Colleges and Universities must be combined with broader Federal policies to assist low income, educationally disadvantaged students. Increasing support for Pell Grants, the Federal TRIO programs, and programs that are aimed at building the high-order workforce skills of our Nation (such as the Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program) is essential to combat the challenges of limited college access and success for our Nation's growing emerging majority populations.

Low college access and degree achievement rates have been a persistent problem for American Indians, the result of decades of neglect, marginalization, and discrimination. As one of the main drivers of economic and social development for all American Indian communities, Tribal Colleges and Universities are critical to the future success of these communities. I urge you to continue the Committee's bipartisan history of support for TCU and act without delay to make these investments that are so critical to the future prosperity and security of American Indian communities. In so doing, our Nation will be strengthened and sustained for many generations to come.

Thank you again for this opportunity to appear before the Committee on this important issue.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Merisotis, thank you very much. Those were some very interesting statistics you have compiled and offered this Committee.

Dr. Bette Keltner is the Dean of the School of Nursing and Health Studies at Georgetown University. Dr. Keltner, thank you very much for being with us. You may proceed.

STATEMENT OF DR. BETTE KELTNER, DEAN, SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH STUDIES, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Ms. KELTNER. Thank you so much.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to address the Committee concerning tribal colleges and universities.

I am Bette Keltner, not from a tribal college, but on behalf of Georgetown University School of Nursing and Health Studies, to support this community. We at Georgetown NHS do offer bachelor of science and master's degrees across a variety of programs, nursing of course, human science, health systems, and international health.

Our school also is co-founding with Georgetown Law Center the O'Neill Health Law Institute. I am a member of the Cherokee Nation and have decades of experience supporting American Indians and Alaska Natives. I served two terms as President of the National Alaska Native American Indian Nurses Association, and I am an active member of the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans Into Science.

My interest and involvement in science spans a variety of industries. I have also been on the production side of the economy as a corporate officer for Honda of America Manufacturing before coming to Georgetown in 1999. I would echo Elmer Guy's support for the importance of investment in human assets. As one of the auto manufacturers' success stories in a material business, the competitive edge is given to those who can manage the human assets. It is true that we have evidence from today that tribal colleges and universities have experience in developing and supporting the human assets for American Indians.

Today, I would like to focus my comments on the importance of science and technology at TCU, and the need to further collaboration between TCU and major research universities to advance these fields of study as a means of promoting health and well being.

Certainly, we are familiar with the fact that the Bureau of Labor Statistics' projections for the year 2014 are that professional and science-related occupations will be the fastest growing segment of the labor market, forecasted with over a 20-percent increase in the coming years. We are all familiar with the fact that the fields of science, technology and health care are experiencing explosive growth.

It is also clear that the economy and individual and community well being are dependent upon the new world that we live in, and science and technology open these doors.

It is certainly tragic that the American Indian culture so rooted in traditions associated with nature, that has given us the great first steps in pharmacotherapy with the introduction of aspirin, have fallen behind in participation with their natural affinity for sciences, and particularly life sciences. In talking to several presidents of TCU, it has become clear that the lack of science faculty and their preparation is one of the things that contributes to this gap. This fact creates a barrier for Indian students who would wish to participate in the most rapidly growing segment of the economy.

There are some bright spots. Certainly, we have heard that today, for example, with the energy initiative. We have also become familiar with the Navajo Technical College and the good work they have done. I would point to their Hogan Project that ensures that technology and computer skills are brought to bear and can afford students, as well as faculty and the community, important growth in education and economy.

TCU are challenged because students often come needing remediation. This is even more important that we have science faculty and education.

I would propose that as we examine the ways to do this efficiently, that we take a look at what Mr. Thomas has said earlier, about leveraging partnerships. As a former resident of Wyoming, I was particularly pleased that he made my point in starting this.

I would suggest that we do envision those opportunities, and we have heard some examples, for partnerships between TCU and major universities, but particular major research universities, as having leveraging benefits. These benefits include research collaboration, student services, educational pipeline programs, and a unique perspective that would enhance cultural competence in a range of fields that include informatics, life sciences, public health, nursing, social work, medicine, and linguistics.

To point to an example, I would say that two summers ago, Stacy Phelps, the science educator at Oglala Lakota College, and we have seen pictures demonstrating their great vitality, visited my office at Georgetown University. One of his roles is to get more students interested in pursuing science. Their capacity has some limitations, and they have been innovative in deploying what they can do through a partnership with South Dakota School of Mines and Technology to address some of those limitations. That collaboration is a good thing, but could be further advanced with partnerships

with research-intensive universities, especially those with life sciences.

We had at that time 16 students from Pine Ridge who have come over the summers as high school enrichment programs, students who are primed to have their appetites whetted for science. Stacy Phelps and I sat in a room with great enthusiasm and ideas about the desirable goal, and just the limitation of those opportunities to get together and move an idea forward.

As we know, science learning is a long continuum. We have heard the importance of students being prepared from early education through elementary school, high school, and of course college. This continuum is even more important in science. We cannot expect students to drop in on page 85 and understand the content. They must learn it from page one or they are lost.

At Georgetown School of Nursing Health Studies we have had Pathways to Success, which leverages another dimension that major research universities can bring to a partnership with TCU. This project bringing high school students to the Georgetown campus for life science study began with startup money from Goldman Sachs Foundation, QUALCOMM and FedEx. Pathways is an initiative to enhance interest in academic preparation for high school students who are prepared to attend college and to instill in them both the skills and the interest in life sciences.

At research universities, we can also introduce students to destinations and to opportunities. One of the things that connects the activities is that the Imaging Science and Information Center at Georgetown University, with the help of Senator Conrad, has been implementing an internet-based diabetes management program focused specifically on American Indian populations. I have served on the board of this group since its inception. The success in managing diabetes at these remote locations has been remarkable. We can also do testing at a distance of (B)(1)(c) and get a real sense of the progress.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Keltner. I am going to have to ask you to summarize the remainder of your testimony if you would.

Ms. KELTNER. The remainder of my testimony is that I would support the continued support for TCU, and that as we look forward to the vitality of this capacity, that we encourage investment in science education and look to potential collaborations for TCU in research-intensive universities.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Keltner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. BETTE KELTNER, DEAN, SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH STUDIES, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, and thank you for this opportunity to address the Committee concerning tribal colleges and universities (TCU).

I am Bette Keltner, dean of Georgetown University School of Nursing and Health Studies (NHS). We offer bachelors and masters degrees of science in Health Systems, Human Science, International Health and Nursing. Our school also operates, in partnership with Georgetown University Law Center, the Linda and Timothy O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law.

I am a member of the Cherokee Nation and have decades of experience supporting American Indian and Alaska Natives. I served two terms as president of the Na-

tional Alaska Native American Indian Nurses Association and am an active member ofthe Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science.

My interest and involvement in science spans a variety of industries. I have also been on the production side of the economy as a corporate officer for Honda Mfg before coming to Georgetown University in 1999.

Role of Tribal Colleges and Universities

The important role of TCU in education and their contributions to their communities has been well documented and discussed.

Today, I would like to focus my comments on: (1) the importance of science and technology at TCU and (2) the need for further collaboration between TCU and major research universities to advance these fields of study as a means of promoting the public's health and well-being.

According to 2005 Bureau of Labor Statistics projections for the year 2014, professional and related occupations will be the fastest growing segment of the Labor Market by 21.2 percent over the coming years.

I am sure we all understand that fields in science, technology, and health care are experiencing disproportionate growth.

It is clear that the economy *and* individual and community well-being are dependent upon the new world that we live in where science and technology open doors.

Investment in the sciences has worked in various cultures, including in countries like Ireland that currently has a low unemployment rate and high standard of living.

It is certainly tragic that the American Indian culture—which is so close to nature—has never adequately translated that love to life sciences, science, and technology.

In talking to several presidents of TCU, it became clear they lack science faculty and preparation. This fact creates a barrier for Indian students who wish to participate in most things that science allows us to do.

There are some bright spots, however.

A review of recent issues of the *Tribal College Journal of American Indian Higher Education* highlights some examples where TCU programs in science and technology are serving the greater interests of American Indians and their communities.

- The Native Grass Project at Haskell Indian Nations University in Kansas focuses its research on switch grass—a warm season, perennial grass found throughout the United States with biofuel potential. The program will help identify the attributes desirable for the revitalization and expansion of the grass for future use by Native people and for the restoration of Army installation lands.
- In New Mexico, the Navajo Technical College has partnered with Navajo Nation on the Internet to implement the Hogan Project. The project will ensure technology is an integral part of the Navajo community development in education, health care, public safety, and economics. The project will bring supercomputing capabilities to research and education projects at the college and allow integration with other research and computing facilities such as the University of New Mexico. E-Learning programs will bring advanced collaborative education models to remote communities.

This sampling highlights a fertile ground in the area of science and technology at TCU. As American Indian communities seek to address their educational, economic, and health needs, the importance of science and technology *and* collaboration grows.

Yet, TCU are challenged because students are not well-prepared. Their ability is limited to offer strong education in life science, science, and technology because of faculty who lack depth in these fields and a remote location.

I propose that we look to unite resources from major universities to address this problem.

University Collaboration with TCU

Partnership between TCU and major universities with strong research programs can have wide-reaching benefits.

Those benefits include research collaboration, student service opportunities, educational pipeline programs, and a unique perspective that would enhance cultural competence in a range of fields, including informatics, life sciences, public health, nursing, social work, anthropology, medicine, and linguistics.

Today, I want to talk about start-up opportunities at Georgetown University.

Two summers ago, Stacy Phelps, the science educator at Oglala Lakota College, visited my office at Georgetown University. One of his roles there is to get more students interested in pursuing science.

The college's capacity is limited. Faculty members at this TCU lack a depth in the sciences. The college has begun a partnership with South Dakota School of Mines and Technology to begin addressing this shortcoming.

That collaboration is a good thing. However, it will not provide the strong base in science that these students would encounter at a research intensive university.

So Stacy Phelps and I sat in my office with a well-known problem, a desirable goal, and a great deal of enthusiasm.

With seed money, we could have launched a substantive program that would leverage the strengths of OLC and South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, as well as the major scientific and research capacities of Georgetown University.

But none existed.

As we know, science learning is a long continuum, from early education through college and beyond. Students cannot drop in on page 85 of a science textbook and be expected to understand the content. They have to learn it from page one. Or else they are lost.

One project we launched at the School of Nursing and Health Studies is "Pathways to Success." We have begun this effort with start-up funding from the Goldman Sachs Foundation, QUALCOMM, and FedEx.

Pathways is an initiative designed to enhance the interest and academic preparation of underserved high school students. A goal is for students to attend college and pursue careers in biomedical science, life science, health care, and technology.

Between 2003 and 2006, 16 high school students from the Oglala Lakota tribe of the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota participated.

Such a program whets the appetite of these students for science and technology. With seed money, we could capitalize on these initial investments and develop a stronger partnership with TCU to offer students even greater exposure to a top-tier research institution.

At research intensive universities, students can be exposed to state-of-the-art science, such as the Imaging Science and Information Systems Center at Georgetown University Medical Center.

Over the last several years, the Center—with the help of Senator Conrad—has been implementing an Internet-based diabetes management program focused specifically on American Indian populations. It also holds potential for expansion through partnerships with Tribal Colleges.

In the area of education, the School of Nursing and Health Studies participates in the Association of American Indian Physicians' National Native American Youth Initiative.

This is an academic enrichment and reinforcement program designed to prepare American Indian and Alaska Native high school students for admission to college and professional school *and* to encourage them to pursue a career in the areas of health science and biomedical research.

These students are hosted at Georgetown for a half-day where they hear a faculty lecture and view the Georgetown University Simulator (GUS)—a full-body, robotic mannequin that can realistically replicate a human patient in a clinical setting. In addition, our Admissions and Outreach staff at NHS conducts a 2-hour seminar with the students that focuses on the college admissions process.

Bettering, Building The Relationship

For various reasons—including health, education, and workforce—it is clear that a solid grounding in science and technology is a missed opportunity for American Indians. I have discussed the potential that TCU themselves hold.

But clearly this is just a beginning. In terms of a well-trained workforce, sustainable jobs, and addressing tribal needs, American Indian Nations require more Indians and Indian youth, in particular, to pursue education in the sciences and technology. TCU hold a key to achieving that goal, particularly through collaboration with research intensive universities.

These collaborations require dedication at the ground level, as well as external funding and a smart sustainable framework that allow programs to flourish.

Congress could catalyze such collaboration by brokering partnerships between TCU and research intensive universities—through Federal funding of pilot projects and national centers of excellence. Adding competitive advantages for collaboration between TCU and universities to the proposal process for existing grant programs would also encourage increased collaboration to build scientific and technological bridges.

I thank you again for giving me the time to address this issue of consequence, as well as for your work on behalf of American Indian and Alaska Native communities. I am happy to respond to any questions that Members of the Committee might have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Dr. Keltner, for your perspective on these issues. This is an interesting panel, and there are some very interesting perspectives on this very important issue.

It seems to me, hearing from the four of you, that there is a consensus that there needs to be a better funding source for tribal colleges. Senator Tester made the point, and I think it is an accurate point as well, that just an adequate funding source for the students that are coming in, the increase in students, is not in itself sufficient either because you have to have an infrastructure program to build the buildings and complete the campuses and so on, and to deal with those issues that are present at every college.

Dr. Gipp, for example, at your college, you have inherited some very old buildings in a very nice campus setting, but very old buildings that I assume require a substantial amount of repair. Tell us just a bit about the infrastructure problems.

Dr. GIPP. Well, as you know, we occupy an old military fort. It is a good case of the Indians taking over the fort in this case for peaceful and educational purposes. But our core buildings are about 105 years old. Fort Abraham Lincoln is what it was called. We have added other buildings, classrooms and some labs, but we have a major, major need for new classroom space as well as new housing, because we are campus-based. We have gone from roughly 375 students several years ago to close to 1,100 or 1,200 students this year. That will continue to grow, as I talked about earlier, as is the case with Navajo Technical College and the other schools.

So that issue of both maintaining as well as building new, and addressing the new problems, but maintaining what you have, is very, very critical.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Guy, with respect to your request for the authorization language, was your college also funded in previous Presidential budget requests prior to the year 2000?

Mr. GUY. Yes, Mr. Chairman; we have been in the funding before.

The CHAIRMAN. And were you told any reason that the funding was dropped, beginning with the current Administration?

Mr. GUY. Yes; the explanation that we received is that we were not authorized as one of the colleges under the legislation, the American Higher Education Act.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Merisotis, your data that you presented is especially gripping with respect to this shortfall on funding, the dramatic increase in the number of students that have come into the system, which describes the popularity of the tribal college system offering something that had not been previously an opportunity for many of these students, many of whom, you say, are nontraditional students. You indicated that one-third of the students are over years of age?

Mr. MERISOTIS. Correct. Yes; the tribal colleges are one of the great untold success stories in American higher education. We tend to look at the funding challenges of the tribal colleges, which are severe. We at times may view them in a sort of deficit mentality.

In fact, what tribal colleges have been able to do with such limited resources is really extraordinary. An example of that is the way that they are serving these nontraditional students. But I think a broader example is the way that the tribal colleges have become community resources, community centers in terms of tribal languages, economic development, and social services. They really play an enormous role in these communities, well beyond what you see in an awful lot of other mainstream institutions of higher learning.

I think one of the most important things from the perspective of the tribal colleges is that the tribal colleges are absolutely dependent on the Federal Government for operating support. We do have the important issue of infrastructure, which is outside of the operating expenses that we need to concentrate on. But remember that the operating support of the tribal colleges cannot come from the States for the reasons that you pointed out in your prior comments and cannot come from the levying of local property taxes. It must come from the Federal Government in terms of the Federal trust responsibility.

I think that in that sense when I try to describe to individuals in mainstream higher education about the role of the tribal colleges, I say the Federal Government plays the same role to tribal colleges that the State plays to public institutions of higher education. The difference is that in no State in the Country would a public higher education institution stand for the level of uncertainty that exists in terms of basic operating expenses. Their existence is literally annually threatened because of the uncertainties of the funding process. I think that is something that really needs to change and be stabilized over time.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you have described the dilemma that most tribal college presidents would tell you is a very serious problem their offices address all year long, trying to determine what kind of student support will I get; what kind of funding will I get that provides the opportunity for me to continue to run this college.

One of the things that I am hoping we can do in the Committee on Indian Affairs is to begin to describe the success of this system, even with those challenges. We should not apologize for holding up a student to say, as Dr. Gipp did, he described a student that everybody had given up on, who was now a very significant success. We should never shy away from that. These success stories are very important for people to understand the conditions under which those who otherwise could not get a college education have not only gotten a college education, but been able to use that to do that something very significant in their communities.

So I am hoping that we can begin to gather more and more anecdotal information from these colleges about these success stories. I think that is a story, the untold story, as you describe it, Mr. Merisotis.

I am going to turn the questions to Senator Tester and ask him to complete the hearing. I have to be on the floor and then we have votes that will begin momentarily, but I have to be on the floor at 10:45. So I will call on Senator Tester. Let me, as I do, thank all four of you for being here today. We consider the health, education and housing issues to be very significant issues that represent a priority for this Committee in the Indian nations. So this is one

part of that today, the issue of tribal colleges, something that I have very significant and strong interest in. This Committee will play a significant role in the reauthorizations. We also will play, as I will play on the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, a significant role on the funding side as well. I thank all four of you.

Senator Tester.

Senator TESTER [presiding]. Yes; thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I guess I will ask you, Dr. Guy or Dr. Gipp, and I will just make the assumption that both UTTC and Navajo Tech, the reason they were able to survive is because Congress stepped in and put money toward them. Is your funding level the same at the $5,000 figure? What did they use for funding level for you?

Dr. GIPP. We don't operate under a current formula right now. It has been basically what Congress has been able to provide to us, as opposed to really no policy by the BIA in regard to the two institutions you just mentioned. So we are left to the whim and the will, if you will, of what the Administration has said, which is zero request at this point in time. You are correct that the Congress has intervened and restored those funds. The operating funds under the Interior Appropriations for United Tribes are a little less than $3.5 million and I believe about $1.7 million for Navajo Technical College annually from the Interior-BIA side of the operating dollars.

Senator TESTER. Did you guys do something to tick off the Administration?

[Laughter.]

Dr. GIPP. We don't know. At least I don't know, and maybe President Guy has another story on this. But as I say, the OMB fellow said hey, until you are somebody's favorite, you are not going to get financed.

Senator TESTER. It is a situation we will have to deal with, it appears, again.

Mr. Merisotis, you talked about enhancing title III support and making it formula based. Are you talking so much per student? What kind of formula did you have in mind?

Mr. MERISOTIS. Well, formula meaning that each college would not have to go through a complicated competitive annual process each year, much like is done, for example, in funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, also under title III, part B, where there is a formula based on the students that are enrolled and then resources are allocated based on the student enrollments.

It seems like this sort of annual competitive process that the colleges have to go through is not very productive.

Senator TESTER. I understand.

Mr. MERISOTIS. They have limited staff to do this kind of work, and I would much rather see them focusing those staff on academic issues, rather than on these competitive grant processes. They have significant need for all of them.

Senator TESTER. Right. Then you talked about a facility improvement line item, if that is the proper term. If you were in a position of power, how would you structure that?

Mr. MERISOTIS. I would look at the funding that is already allocated to the other land grant institutions of higher education that have been around for many years, the tribal colleges gained land

grant status in 1994, and provide support that is comparable on a per-student basis to the land grant support. I don't know what that exact number is right now, but it seems like the support that the tribal colleges should get as land grant institutions should be comparable to the support that other institutions receive.

Senator TESTER. OK. And then in the last question, and I will start out with Dr. Keltner, but you can all answer this. I don't mean to be negative toward the tribal colleges at all, by the way. I think they do a great job and they are a great hope for economic development in Indian country. Make no mistake about it. But the dropout rate is something that concerns me.

I have a couple of questions. Does it concern you? Is it something we need to be concerned about? And number two, if you are concerned about it, what do you attribute it to? And what do you think we can do to help reduce it?

We will start with Dr. Keltner, and any of the rest of you can respond to that if you would like. It is your choice. The reason I direct it at you is because of the collaborative efforts of you. I assume that you work with a number of schools. So go ahead.

Ms. KELTNER. That is correct, Mr. Tester. The graduation rate certainly is a concern, and the preparation for a competitive market is generally very good. I speak to one partnership that we have initiated in working with Sisseton-Wahpeton College, where the pass rate for nurses was a total failure, 100 percent failure. The things that can be done at a distance can be leveraged with certain types of collaborations.

We must beef up the faculty in those particular areas. I know recruitment, hiring and retention is on the minds of college presidents always, and we have people who can speak to that. To the extent that we use our entire social capacity of having collaborations, I think we can enhance the achievements of students who do make it to tribal colleges and universities.

Mr. MERISOTIS. I would push back a little bit on your question about dropouts, simply because the complex life circumstances of so many students in the tribal colleges means that they are going to be involved in what the economic researchers called "swirl," which is they come in, they go out, they come in, they go back, they have child care, they have family responsibilities, they have work, et cetera.

So when we say "dropout," I am not sure what measure we are really talking about. In terms of mainstream colleges, the typical time that it takes to get a degree, certainly that is true. But the tribal colleges, as I pointed out, are enormous community-based resources. A lot of the individuals stay connected to their communities through the tribal college. Tribal colleges are providing GED training. They are providing health care services, diabetes education, et cetera.

So there are a variety of things where the tribal colleges are serving as community resources, and these students come in and out. An awful lot of the tribal college students we have learned through a project that AIHEC has called the American Indian Measures of Success, are actually successful in many other ways beyond that narrow definition of a dropout rate.

Senator TESTER. You bring up a good point. I think we need to keep in mind that you don't necessarily need to have a degree to have a good job or be successful, family wise or otherwise. So that is a good point.

Dr. GIPP. Senator, you mentioned the dropout rate. I think about 80 percent to 90 percent of our population from pre-K through 12 are in public school systems, by the way. That is where the severe dropout rate is occurring, when we talk about that. What happens, though, is that we take those young adults that are coming out of those systems, sometimes dropping out, and many of our tribal colleges are providing the adult education programs so they can get the GED, so they can get into the post-secondary system. That is where I think we come in, at the points that Mr. Merisotis has pointed out, in terms of providing those community services to support them so that they can be successful.

The evidence shows that really when our students go through a tribal college system, they are going to be far more successful, not only graduating from our system, but also it increases their ability to be successful in the mainstream institutions that they graduate to in terms of other universities or colleges that we referred to in terms of those partnerships. So there is really the crux of what we do in terms of turning that around. Unfortunately, it comes at the later stage of life than those who initially drop out.

Senator TESTER. Dr. Guy, did you want to respond?

Mr. GUY. Yes, Senator; I guess back home we call the dropout rate sometimes "step out." Sometimes they step out and then they step back into the school. What we are doing is we are looking at dual credit programs, to where we want to enroll them while they are still in high school, and then we give them credit when they come to our school, and then they have already earned some college credits. Everything that we are doing is we are training high school teachers in math and science to use technology in their curriculum, and more effectively use technology.

Senator TESTER. That is good. I want to do whatever we can do to help facilitate your success. I need to make that clear. I think that when you look at the at-risk thing that I brought up with Carl Artman, with Native American students, I don't want to put too much pressure on you, but I think you are really the key to stop that and to turn that around, and to really help those students in K–12. I really firmly believe that. I don't think a solution will come out of conventional colleges, or it would have already.

The other issue that I don't want to saddle you with, but it is the truth, and I think there is a tremendous opportunity for tribal schools in reducing the unemployment rate. Education, as we all know, is the key to economic development. We just need to make sure that you folks have the ability to be successful, to help turn that around. That would save us all just a whole lot of heartache.

So yes, did you want to respond?

Dr. GIPP. I was just going to point out, too, along the line that you are talking about, the issue of economic development and infrastructure development in our tribal communities. I really think that one of the major oversights by the BIA in the past 25 years has been not looking at our human resources and what our needs are. We really need to have a major assessment, if you will, study

where our human resources are and what we can then do. That means some additional research that needs to be invested in this area to do successful things like economic development. There is no question that the tribal colleges can and do play a very important part where they are located on the issue of business and economic development, and answering that question of unemployment.

Because you look at Standing Rock where I am from, and you have unemployment that ranges from a low of 50 percent or 55 percent, to a high of 97 percent unemployment. We need to do something about that. I think that tribal colleges are a wonderful example of that, Senator.

Senator TESTER. Yes; absolutely.

With that, I want to thank the panel for being here today. I think it was a very, very good hearing and very enlightening. I appreciate your time.

With that, this Committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:55 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. KENT CONRAD, U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH DAKOTA

Thank you, Chairman Dorgan for holding this important hearing. I want to also welcome Dr. David Gipp, President of United Tribes Technical College here today.

I am a strong believer in the tribal colleges. The tribal colleges bring hope and opportunity to thousands of Native Americans across the country. Tribal colleges serve young people preparing to enter the job market, dislocated workers learning new skills, and people seeking to move off welfare.

I am particularly proud to serve as Co-Chair, along with Senator Domenici, of the Senate Bipartisan Task Force on Tribal Colleges and Universities. The task force works to raise awareness of the important role the colleges play in their respective communities and advance initiatives to help improve and expand the quality education they provide.

Over the years, I have met with many tribal college students, and I am always impressed by their commitment to their education, their families and communities. I am a fighter for the tribal colleges because I know how critical they are to progress and growth in Indian country.

This year, the President proposed a budget that cuts funding for tribal colleges. It also eliminates all funding for United Tribes Technical College and Navajo Technical College. Tough budget choices must be made, but I can think of no worse choice than cutting funding for the tribal colleges.

While annual appropriations for tribal colleges have increased in recent years, core operational funding levels are still only 75 percent of the $6,000 authorized per Indian student count. Funding is not even keeping pace with rising student enrollments. Since 1981, enrollments have increased by more than 330 percent.

It is also not keeping pace with inflation. It would require $6,304 per Indian student, $300 more per student than the current authorized level, for the tribal colleges to have the same buying power as they had in 1981.

It is important for Congress to do all it can to support their incredible work and look for opportunities to help them expand and grow. Tribal colleges make a difference and deserve our support.

Again, thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing. I look forward to the testimony of the witnesses.

○