

WE SEEK...

*A world free of war
and the threat of war*

*A society with equity
and justice for all*

*A community where every person's
potential may be fulfilled*

An earth restored

**Friends
Committee
on National
Legislation**



FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON



NATIONAL LEGISLATION

245 Second Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
800-630-1330
www.fcnl.org

*A Quaker
Lobby in the
Public Interest*

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FCNL is located in the heart of Capitol Hill,
across the street from the Hart Senate Office Building

FCNL staff in Washington, DC

work with volunteers, community activists and policy experts from across the country to bring to national policymakers a persuasive voice on a variety of concerns. FCNL constituents and supporters come from across the political field, from conservative to liberal. FCNL program work is nonpartisan and seeks to minimize ideological differences by appealing to common interests. FCNL draws in people from many faiths in addition to Quakers and is often a bridge between religious and secular organizations working together on common concerns.

The FCNL Education Fund, a parallel (501)(c)(3) organization founded in 1982, supports the research, analysis and education for which FCNL is known and respected.

Influencing national policy for peace and justice at home and abroad since 1943

Working with tens of thousands of people around the country to advocate social and economic justice, peace, care for the earth, and good government

Helping you connect with your national legislators to turn protest into policy change

Bringing the concerns, experiences, and testimonies of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) to policymakers in the nation's capital

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Direct Lobbying of members of Congress, their staff, and executive branch agencies.

Education, Research, Training—timely, relevant and usable legislative information for constituents, colleague organizations and members of Congress.



Field Program with lobby days, resources for action, timely mobilization of grassroots activists.

Networking for Peace & Justice—providing leadership and encouraging cooperation among like-minded groups.

Young Adult Program with internships, lobby days, and training workshops.

Publications and Web Site include monthly FCNL *Washington Newsletter*, quarterly FCNL *Indian Report*, regular e-mail news and action alerts, and other web and print publications. <http://www.fcni.org>

FCNL PROGRAMS

Peaceful Prevention of Deadly Conflict: supports U.S. policies that can increase capacities to manage conflict peacefully.

Civil Liberties and Human Rights: addresses the rapid erosion of civil liberties and human rights under the USA-PATRIOT Act and subsequent measures.

East Asia Policy Education: promotes understanding of U.S.-Korea issues and seeks to avert armed conflict on the Korean peninsula.

Military and Federal Budget Information and Analysis: interprets the impact of military programs and policy on both the legislative agenda and the federal budget.

Nuclear Disarmament: builds Congressional opposition to the resumption of nuclear testing and the development of new nuclear weapons.

Conventional Weapons and Small Arms: builds Congressional support for legislation to monitor and control U.S. weapons exports.

Energy and Environmental Policy: advocates reducing oil dependency, improving U.S. energy efficiency, developing renewable sources of energy, and investing in alternative modes of transportation.

Native American Advocacy: seeks to build alliances between religious communities and Indian organizations to influence policy.



www.fcni.org

THE VALUE OF FCNL

Thanks so much for all your helpful advice. It is so practical and gives me a sense of purpose and hope...

—a California supporter

Many thanks for the useful information and your continuing commitment to indispensable work...

—a Midwest constituent

Your success in producing a clear-thinking, well-informed body of people across the country may be your most important achievement.

—Retired U.S. Senator Mark Hatfield

I look forward to finding FCNL's admirable publications in my mailbox... the quality of the journalism is enviable, always held to high professional standards that speak to significant issues...

—a Quaker activist

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Dedicated to
walking gently
on the Earth



FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL LEGISLATION

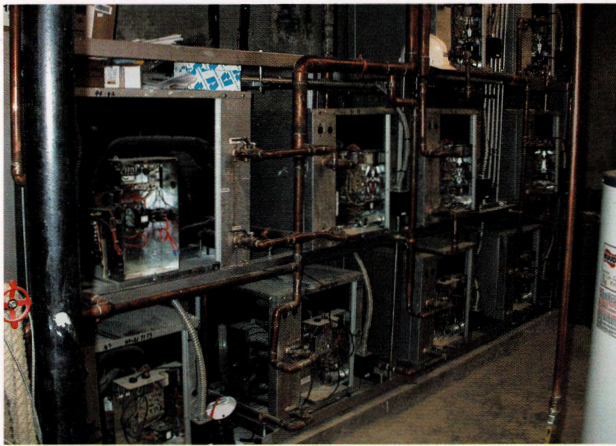
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FCNL's renovated building is a
environmentally friendly

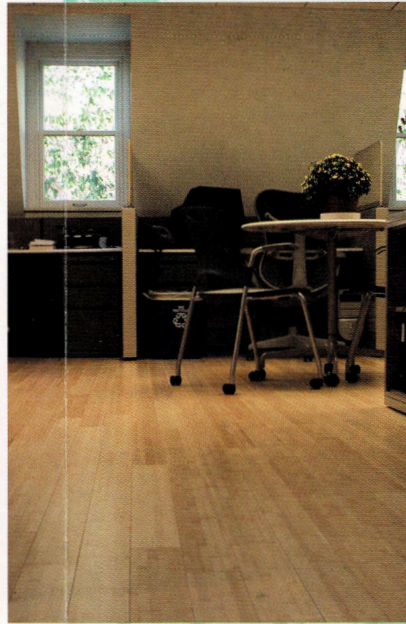




Energy Efficient Windows: High-insulation, low E glass allows bright clear light into the building while insulating against heat and cold. Because many of the windows can be opened, staff are able to enjoy the natural comfort of Washington's pleasant and temperate spring and fall climate.



Geothermal Heating and Cooling System: The system uses ten, 350-foot-deep wells drilled on the property. A non-fluorocarbon fluid circulates through a closed system into the wells, using the earth's constant 55 degree temperature at that depth to heat and cool the building. The system is at least 50 percent more efficient than conventional heating systems.



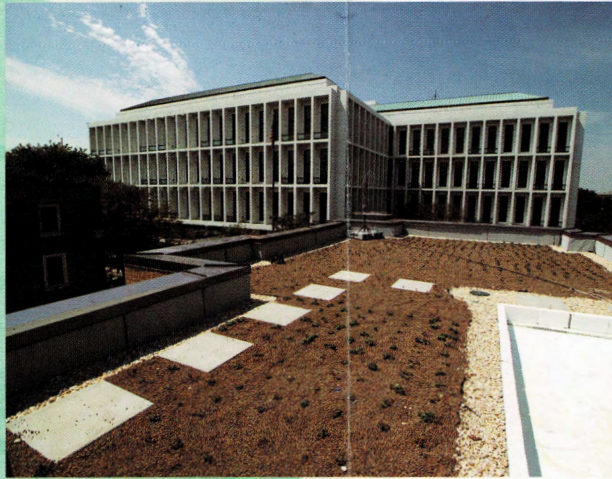
Bamboo Flooring: The attractive bamboo flooring is only the most obvious use of renewable materials found throughout the building. Linoleum flooring in some spaces is made of all-natural material; the wood trim comes from certified sustainably-harvested beech and maple; and the acoustic ceiling tiles have high recycled content as do the carpets.

Green features FCNL

The construction budget for the renovation was in the range of similar conventional buildings in Washington, DC. Life cycle operations and maintenance costs are less than those for the former building, primarily due to more efficient cooling, energy efficient lighting, and insulation envelope. Durability and design will make FCNL a building, adjacent to conventional buildings, a witness to environmental progress for generations to come.

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Green Roof: The vegetated roof helps control rain runoff and decreases the building's contribution to the city's "heat island" effect—the increase in urban temperatures due to the absorption of heat in non-reflective materials and surfaces of most buildings. The roof is landscaped with low-maintenance, drought-tolerant plants which do not require irrigation. The planting medium also provides added insulation to the roof.



Light Scoop: Rooftop windows "scoop" natural light into the central core of the building. The light is conveyed to the floors below through glass floors in the elevator lobby which transmit the light from the third to the second and first floors below.

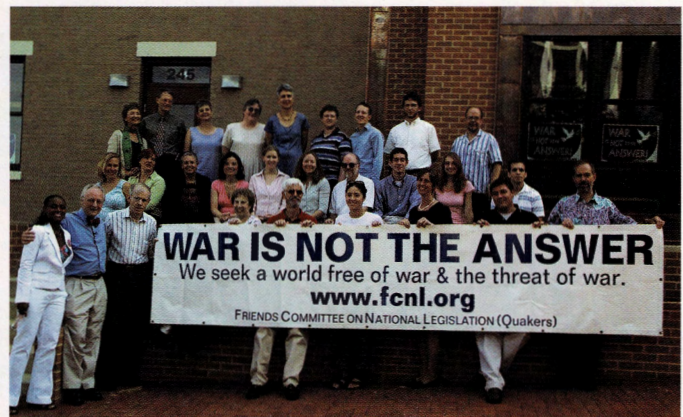


ADA Compliant: Although exempt from the requirement of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), FCNL chose to comply. The outside ramp, elevator, and wheelchair-accessible bathrooms and copy machines are some of the ADA features of the building.

trend-setting model of
architecture in the nation's capital.



The FCNL leadership saw the renovation of our Civil War-era structure as an opportunity to construct a building on Capitol Hill that would ensure the next 60 years of FCNL's work in bringing a Quaker perspective to public policy. The new offices are infused with light, comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, and allow FCNL to walk softly over the Earth because of the building's many "green" features. It is a place from which FCNL can proclaim its message that: "War is Not the Answer."



FCNL staff, September 2005

More information about the "green" features of the renovated building and about FCNL's legislative program to reduce U.S. oil dependence and promote development of sustainable energy sources can be found on FCNL's web site at www.fcnl.org



Hear Our Story

Communications and Contemporary Native Americans

An Educational Symposium



WIDENING THE COMMUNICATIONS CIRCLE

March 2-3, 2006

Wyndham Washington DC Hotel

Media image is especially crucial because it is that image that looms large as non-Indians decide the fate of Indian people.

Rennard Strickland
Knight Professor of Law, University of Oregon
from Tonto's Revenge

Few members of Congress or their constituents across the U.S. know much about either the history or contemporary lives of Native people. When complex tribal land, water rights, taxation and jurisdiction issues are debated in the Congress or chronicled in media reports, it is difficult for people without any kind of historical context to understand the issues. In recent years a number of misleading and mostly negative articles have been written about tribal governments, especially those involved in gaming enterprises. If these types of articles are left unanswered, they can ultimately impact federal policy as it relates to tribal governments and citizens. There is a direct link between public perception and public policies affecting tribal people.

Wilma Mankiller
author and former Principal Chief of the Cherokees

The American Indian is invisible in prime-time television.

Mark Reed
chair of American Indians in Film and Television,
gives the networks F grades across the board
Multi-ethnic Media Coalition

Thursday, March 2, 2006

7:00am **Registration** **Vista Ballroom Foyer**
8:15-9:00am **Continental Breakfast** **Vista A Ballroom**

The Challenges The Stories

9:00-10:30am **Opening Plenary** **Vista A Ballroom**
Moderator: **Laura Harris**
Executive Director, Americans for Indian Opportunity

The Challenge in Social and Political Climate **President Joe Garcia**
National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)

The Mission: Creating Deeper and Wider Circle of Knowledge **Treasurer, Ron Allen**
National Congress of American Indians

The Facts: Successes, Stories from Native Nations **Jackie Old Coyote**
Harvard, Manager for Honoring Nations Program

The Stories from Tribal Leaders: Pride, Heritage, Resilience **Rep. Elizabeth Furse**
Institute for Tribal Governments

Getting Positive Stories into the Mainstream Media **Gwendolen Cates**
Filmmaker, Photographer, Writer

QUERIES

Who does want to hear the story/stories?
Why do non-Natives fail to see where they can contribute to change?
Why do so many non-Natives assume that a symposium like this is only for members of tribes?

WORKSHOPS

Problems Facing Indian Country

Note: The first three sessions are designed for participants who want to acquire more knowledge in order to better understand the rest of the symposium program and to take crucial information back home.

10:45am-12:15pm (Participants will choose one workshop.)

Historical Overview of Problems **Room EBS 216**

Moderator: **Joe Volk**

Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation

Lead-off Speakers: **Ada Deer**, Former Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs

Janeen Comenote, National Urban Indian Family Coalition

Resource Person: **Alison Owings**, Oral Histories author

Legislative Overview of Problems **East Room**

Moderator/Speaker: **Paul Moorehead**

Gardner, Carton and Douglas

Lead-off Speakers: **David Mullon**, General Counsel, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

Amber Ebarb, National Congress of American Indians

Aaron Mercer, Legislative Assistant, Senator Sam Brownback

Resource Person: **Jefferson Keel**, NCAI First Vice President

Judicial Overview of Problems **West Room**

Moderator/Speaker: **Richard Guest**

Native American Rights Fund

Lead-off Speakers: **John Dossett**, Attorney, National Congress of American Indians

Bill McAllister, Journalist, Cobell Law Suit Team

Resource Person: **Cush Anthony**, formerly Maine Committee on State-Tribal Relations

Journalistic Overview of Problems **Vista B Ballroom**

Moderator/Speaker: **Kim Baca**

Executive Director, Native American Journalists Association

Lead-off Speakers: **Ron Smith**, Chair, Communications Department, Buffalo State College

American Indian Policy and Media Initiative (AIPMI)

Patty Talahongva, Native America Calling

Resource Person: **Chief Kenneth Adams**, Upper Mattapori Tribe

12:15-1:30pm **Luncheon Address** **Vista A Ballroom**

Improving State-Tribal Relationships through Communication **Brian Schweitzer**
Governor—Montana

1:30-2:15pm **A Conversation with Journalists** **Vista A Ballroom**

Native journalists share their own stories.

Tim Johnson, *National Museum of the American Indian*

Mary Kim Titla, *Native Youth Online Magazine*

Mark Trahant, *Editorial Page Editor of Seattle Intelligencer*

INDIAN IMAGES IN BROADER SOCIETY

2:15-3:30pm **Plenary Session** **Vista A Ballroom**

Moderator: **José Barreiro**

Editor of Indian Country Today, AIPMI

Panel on Distorted & Literal Representation, Effects on Public Opinion

Old & New Stereotypes **Suzan Shown Harjo**
Morningstar Institute

Analysis of Coverage, Missing Dimensions **Dr. Robert Lichter**
President, Center for Media & Public Affairs

Unknown, Unseen Influences on Final News Product **Lori Buckner**
News Editor, US News

WORKSHOPS

Media Solutions and Successes

3:45-5:15pm **Monitoring of and Interaction with Media** **Room EBS 216**

Moderator/Speaker: **Pat Powers**

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Lead-off Speakers: **Mary Ann Weston**, author of *Native Americans in the News*

Susan White, *Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, Oneida*

Resource Person: **Yonce Shelton**, *Call to Renewal*

**Addressing Lack of Indigenous People in Mainstream News—
as Journalists, Guests, Sources, Experts** **Vista B Ballroom**

Moderator/Speaker: **Patty Talahongva**

Native America Calling Host

Lead-off Speakers: **Jim Adams**, *Indian Country Today*

Mark Trahant, *Seattle Intelligencer*

Broadening Entertainment

(Hollywood, Networks, Cable) **East Room**

(Or, What Ever Happened to "Marilyn" from Northern Exposure?)

Moderator/Speaker: **Dawn Jackson**

Indian Office in Los Angeles

Lead-off Speakers: **Harlan McKosato**, *First Americans Cable Entertainment*

Joe Fab, *Documentary Filmmaker*

Resource Person: **Jackie Old Coyote**, *former Actor*

Sharing Stories to Give More

Complete Picture of Indigenous Peoples **West Room**

Moderator/Speaker: **Makani Themba-Nixon**

Praxis Project; Organizer

Lead-off Speakers: **Lawrence Hart** (*Return to the Earth*), *Repatriation, Culture*

Kara Briggs (*Oregonian*), *Health*

Mary Kim Titla (*Native Youth Magazine.com*), *Young Adults*

Stacy Bohlen (*National Indian Health Board*), *Lobbyist Concerned with Invisibility*

Resource Person: **Kristy Alberty** (*National Indian Child Welfare Association*), *Children*

6:30-8:00pm **Evening Reception**

Friday, March 2, 2006

8:00am **Continental Breakfast**

**PUBLIC IMAGES AFFECT
POLITICAL CLOUT**

9:00-9:30am **Plenary Session** **Vista A Ballroom**

Moderator: **Patricia Zell**

Zell & Cox Law, formerly Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

Needs, Assets, and Positive Coverage **Representative Tom Cole**

4th District, Oklahoma

9:30-10:30 **GETTING INDIAN ISSUES FRONT AND CENTER**

How to Engage Senators, Representatives, Media in Hearing Story

1. The problem of low numbers (how to overcome?—success stories) .. **Juana Majel-Dixon**
Secretary of NCAI (violence against women)
Robert Holden
NCAI (Katrina relief)
2. The problem of low visibility (how to overcome?) **Mark Trahant**
Seattle Intelligencer
3. The problem of competing demands, other needy groups **Wade Henderson**
Leadership Conference for Civil Rights
Wanda Resto-Torres
Fellowship of Reconciliation
4. The politics of compassion *Interaction among panelists*

WORKSHOPS

Controversies, Media & Multiple Players

Stakeholders in Conflicts:

Political Allies and Opponents, Multiple Players, Tribes

10:30-11:30am *(Participants will choose one workshop.)*

Organizations lobbying on Behalf of Native Americans **Woodlawn Room**

Focus: Issues and Media Coverage

Moderator/Speaker: **Aura Kanegis**
Friends Committee on National Legislation

Lead-off Speakers: **Gary Gordon**, *National American Indian Housing Council*
Traci McClellan, *National Indian Council on Aging*
Joe Barton, *VA Council of Churches*
Chief Kenneth Adams, *Upper Mattaponi Tribe*

Organizations that Assess Native Americans in Context of Social and Political Trends
(Media, Foundations, Universities, Etc.) **Sherwood Room**

Focus: Gaming and Media Coverage

Moderator: **Mas Ed Nakawatase**
formerly American Friends Service Committee

Lead-off Speakers: **Chris Satullo**, *Philadelphia Inquirer*
Mark Trahan, *Seattle Intelligencer*

Organizations Opposing Native Americans **Ashland South**

Focus: Critics of Sovereignty and Media Coverage

Moderator: **Kristy Alberty**
National Indian Child Welfare Association

Lead-off Speakers: **Beth Brownfield**, *HONOR*
Don Wedll, *long time staffer for, Mille Lacs*
Resource Person: **Tribal Chair Ivan Posey**, *Eastern Shoshone*

11:30-12:30pm **Plenary Session:**

The Big Picture from Native Perspective **Prof. John Mohawk**
SUNY Buffalo

Wrap-up **Pat Powers**

This symposium was made possible with the support of the following individuals and organizations.

FUNDERS FOR MEDIA SYMPOSIUM

- AMB Foundation
- Chace Fund of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
- Indian Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
- William and Mary Shoemaker Fund
- Bequests Fund of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
- Lindley Murray Fund of New York Yearly Meeting
- Obadiah Brown Benevolent Fund
- H.C. Gemmer Christian Family Foundation, Inc.

ORGANIZER, COORDINATOR OF EVENT

- Friends Committee on National Legislation

CO-SPONSORS

- American Indian Policy and Media Initiative
- Americans for Indian Opportunity
- American Friends Service Committee
- Call to Renewal
- First Nations Development Institute
- Honor Our Neighbors' Origins and Rights (HONOR)
- Institute for Tribal Government
- The Interfaith Alliance
- National American Indian Housing Council
- National Congress of American Indians
- National Council of Churches
- National Council on Urban Indian Health
- National Indian Child Welfare Association
- National Indian Council on Aging

CO-SPONSORS - continued

- National Indian Education Association
- National Indian Health Board
- National Native American Families Together
- National Urban Indian Family Coalition
- Native American Journalists Association
- Native American Rights Fund
- Navajo Nation Washington Office
- The Union for Reform Judaism

ENDORSERS

- Buffy Sainte-Marie
- Wilma Mankiller
- Ken Burns

"This symposium will feature the lived experience of Native Americans today. Because race has played a pivotal position in American history, I am interested in how we cohere as a people. One way is by sharing our individual and collective narratives and bringing them to public attention through the media."

**Ken Burns, producer
PBS documentary "The West"**

NOTES

AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

- AMI Foundation
- American Indian Youth Board
- American Indian Youth Leadership Conference
- American Indian Youth Leadership Conference
- American Indian Youth Leadership Conference
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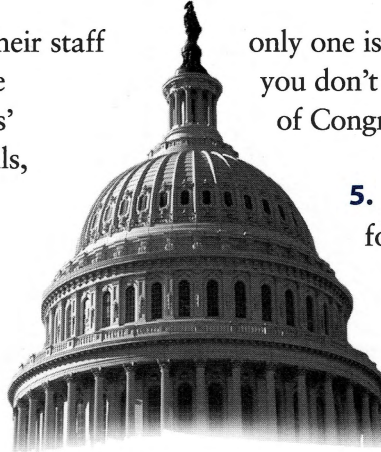
The symposium will feature the first extensive of American Indian youth leaders. Because youth are the future of American Indian history, it is important to know how we can best serve as a people. This will be achieved by individual and collective action. Youth are the future of American Indian history. Youth are the future of American Indian history. Youth are the future of American Indian history.

- American Indian Youth Board
- American Indian Youth Leadership Conference
- American Indian Youth Leadership Conference
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AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Eight Tips for a Successful Lobby Visit



Meeting with your members of Congress or their staff and developing a personal relationship are the most effective ways to influence the legislators' positions on an issue. Phone calls, faxes, emails, and letters are all important but are not as effective as meeting with your members of Congress or their staff.

- 1. Make an appointment.** Schedule the lobby visit in advance; don't just show up. A broad-based delegation of constituents (five is ideal) increases the likelihood of getting a meeting with the legislator rather than his or her staff. Fax the scheduler with your written meeting request (who, where, when, and why), and follow up with a phone call. Many offices ignore a request for meeting with their member of Congress if it's not made in writing.
- 2. Know your legislator's record.** Information on your legislator's co-sponsorship of bills and previous votes is available at www.fcnl.org (click on "Contact Congress" in the left column and then enter your zip code). You can also find valuable personal information about your legislator on his or her home page by following the links from "Contact Congress." Have a face-to-face pre-meeting with your delegation to determine who will cover which points and who is going to "chair" the meeting to keep it on topic.
- 3. Be punctual and positive.** Be on time, and thank the staff person for his or her time. Even if you disagree on most issues, compliment the member of Congress for a vote or action you appreciated. Building rapport with staff is important in developing a long-term relationship.
- 4. Focus the meeting.** Briefly introduce the individuals of the group, the organizations you represent, and the topic you wish to discuss. It is important to talk about

only one issue and to stay on this topic. Remember, you don't have to be an expert on an issue; members of Congress meet with you because you elect them.

- 5. Listen and gather information.** Ask for your legislator's view on an issue. Be patient and passionate; don't react angrily if you don't get the response you want. Remain polite.
- 6. Make a specific request.** Rather than something generic like "I want you to support the environment," a more effective "ask" is to request support for a specific bill or legislative action: "I would like Congressman Doe to support H.R. 1234, the Tree Planting Act." Give several brief points why your member of Congress should support this legislation. Avoid a long philosophical debate about the issue; be concrete.
- 7. Follow up.** Tell the staff person you will get back to him or her if you can't provide information about an issue on the spot. If the staff person is unfamiliar with a bill or is unsure of the legislator's position, ask for follow-up correspondence. Leave one or two pages of relevant material.
- 8. Express your thanks.** At the end of the meeting, thank the staff person for his or her time. Send a thank you letter to the staff person soon after your visit, repeating your "ask." A letter is a nice gesture and helps to develop a relationship over time with a member of Congress and her or his staff.

It often takes several meetings with a member of Congress or his or her staff to influence legislative action. A lobby visit is important to establish a relationship with a congressional office and to get congressional attention on an issue, but make sure to follow up with phone calls, faxes, emails, and letters to the editor.

March 2006





INDIAN REPORT

INDIAN COUNTRY ADDRESSES HEALTH CHALLENGES

Native Americans have poorer health care and, as a result, shorter life spans than other populations in the United States. Poverty, disability, lack of education, bad roads, and distance from medical centers inhibit access to basic health care and mental health and rehabilitation services.

Health programs for American Indians and Alaska Natives have not changed significantly in the 14 years since the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) was last renewed and updated in 1992. New reauthorizing legislation (S. 1057 and H.R. 5312) will address some of the disparities in health status and the delivery of health care services to Native Americans. It will help correct, for example, the severe scarcity of medical practitioners in Indian Country and make available programs such as in-home health services.

Not Waiting for the Federal Government

But native people are not waiting for federal funds to improve health status in Indian Country. A national physical activity campaign, "Just Move It," is having success in native communities. By committing to losing weight themselves, tribal leaders are "walking the walk," serving as role models to help lower the incidence of chronic diseases.

The disproportionate incidence of diabetes among Native Americans is a particular focus of some of these exercise and weight-loss programs. Vigorous exercise is promoted as a regular community activity designed to entice participation. One chant for group walks is "treaties not diabetes."

Many programs use public health, modern medicine, and traditional healers to increase utilization of and confidence in health care services. However, emerging health problems threaten to overwhelm the progress made by tribal health providers. HIV/AIDS and methamphetamine use, which already have affected the general public, are now causing great alarm on reservations. Meth distribution is also a law enforcement issue and, like nurses and pharmacists, police officers are in short supply in Indian Country.

Passage of IHCIA Critical This Year

Tribal leaders and non-native supporters regard reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act as crucial to modernizing health care and providing substance abuse services that will help native communities better address the health implications of the meth crisis.

Native Americans are engaging allied health professionals, medical associations, religious groups, and others whose help can assure passage of the IHCIA in the next few months.

This issue of the *Indian Report* uses the meth epidemic to illustrate how native leaders and champions on the Hill are addressing a behavioral health crisis. ■

HONOR THE PROMISES

TAKING A STAND AGAINST THE METH SCOURGE

“Dancing With Meth Is Dancing With Death,” reads the bumper sticker distributed by the Northern Cheyenne. Oglala Lakota members recently sponsored a day of music and speeches to raise awareness. “We just want to tell the kids before they break for summer about the dangers of [meth] before we bury one more kid on the reservation,” said concert organizer Saunie Wilson, who lost a niece to meth use.

More than 12 million people in the U.S. have tried methamphetamine and Native American communities have not been immune. Tribal leaders are developing innovative strategies to address the meth crisis in Indian Country. But Native Nations confront additional obstacles as they tackle meth abuse in communities that rely on chronically under-funded health care programs.

Tribes nonetheless are facing the challenges that meth presents their people. The Lummi Nation in Washington state permanently banishes convicted drug traffickers from the tribe; the impact on the community was recently illustrated when neighbors burned down a house that was notorious for selling drugs. A treatment facility for drug and alcohol abuse is now open to help young tribal members shake addiction; and the tribe is promoting the anti-drug issue as part of a larger “wellness” campaign.

Outreach and Community Education

Public education is the least expensive way to stop the explosion of meth use. In Montana, for example, tribal leaders have joined with other community leaders, law

enforcement officials, and U.S. senators to promote the Montana Meth Project (MMP) and similar public education efforts. MMP commercials, which depict violent behavior and the gruesome physical changes that affect meth users, have grabbed attention and received praise. Other states and municipalities are now planning similar public education campaigns.

Congress, Administration Begin to Act

Following tribal leaders’ calls for greater collaboration in dealing with meth, the administration and Congress took action. Attorney General Gonzalez visited the Yakima Nation and announced government funding for the Methamphetamine Investigation Training for Tribal Law Enforcement program.

Sen. McCain (AZ) introduced S. 2552, a bill to amend the Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 and the USA PATRIOT Act to make tribes eligible for existing grants dedicated to “confronting the use of methamphetamine.” Sen. Bingaman (NM) has introduced a similar bill, S. 2643, the Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act. Advocates hope the best of both bills will be integrated.

However, these legislative initiatives, while commendable, offer only a partial response to preventing meth from entering and gaining a foothold in native communities. The community-level infrastructure also needs strengthening.

Weak Health System

The Indian Health Service, which provides health services to 1.5 million Native Americans, currently is funded at 59 percent of the level necessary to provide adequate services. Native Nations have to tackle meth abuse with outdated, under-funded, and under-staffed health programs and a dearth of medical facilities. Long-term treatment is unavailable when individuals attempt to overcome their addiction. The new meth crisis illustrates ongoing health problems in Indian Country.

Since 1999, tribal leaders and health experts have sought to update the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA). Bills have been introduced in both houses (S.

(continued on page 3)

The *Indian Report* is a publication of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). FCNL policy emphasizes upholding treaty rights, insuring the fulfilment of the federal trust responsibility, and assuring the right of Native American communities to self-determination. We seek to be guided by the views of Indian tribes, communities and organizations across the country.

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(continued from page 2)

1057, H.R. 5312) that would modernize Indian health care, create more prevention programs, and provide better mental health interventions. While IHCIA languishes in Congress, American Indians and Alaska Natives cope with diabetes, AIDS, and now meth addiction. Many individuals seeking medical treatment must travel two or more hours to obtain services.

Inadequate Public Safety System

Tribes face special challenges trying to effectively patrol their dispersed communities with inadequate personnel; this makes enforcement against meth a difficult proposition. The Department of Justice found that a tribe may have no more than three officers for land areas the size of Delaware. The lack of police presence can be an invitation to outside drug dealers.

The National American Indian Housing Council conducts training for staff of tribal housing authorities across the United States, addressing meth use through education. Workshops help participants identify hallmarks of meth use, underscore the cost of meth to the community—which usually includes property damage—and stress guidelines for the safe restoration of homes contaminated by “meth kitchens.”

Collaboration and Communication

The Wind River Reservation in Wyoming and the Chickasaw Nation in Oklahoma are confronting meth through cooperation with outside law enforcement agencies. Allowing local, state, and federal agents to operate on tribal lands has been a difficult decision for tribal councils which want to preserve their jurisdictional and local control. But Dennis Smith, vice chairman of the Shoshone-Paiute, says his tribe is building new cooperative relationships with outside agencies without compromising tribal sovereignty.

The House has allocated \$4 million *less* funding for tribal police and courts in fiscal year 2007 than the administration recommended. Non-native leaders in law enforcement need to advocate for more, not less, funds for these services. Everyone has an interest in stopping drug trafficking and maximizing public health because crime and illness know no boundaries. ■

The Social Costs of Meth

For the past four years at national Native American conferences where federal officials have been present, grassroots leaders and social service providers have appealed for help to deal with meth. Regardless of the theme of the conference, a repeated plea has been for assistance to halt the onrush of a problem beginning to plague Indian Country. Officials have expressed concern but made no concrete promises. Now that the meth “epidemic” is full blown, congressional hearings are being held, resources offered, and legislation introduced in Congress. The question is: will there be adequate follow-through and on-the-ground resources? The already squeezed budgets of Indian Country make it hard to find money for police to uncover meth labs and handle violent users.

“My people are in pain and are suffering from meth,” Kathleen Wesley-Kitcheyan, chairman of the San Carlos Apache tribe, told senators during an Indian Affairs Committee hearing in April.

The Indian Health Service (IHS) estimates that up to 30 percent of native youths have tried the drug. An IHS deputy director says *meth use is “not specific to Indian Country, but affects the entire nation and scores of communities, especially in the Upper Plains and West, and particularly in rural areas, all of which are places where many tribal communities are also located.”*

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ADVOCACY TIPS: DISTRICT LOBBY VISITS

Talking directly with your representative, not staff, is always more persuasive. One way to increase your chances of a face-to-face meeting is asking an influential go-between to call the district office and set up the meeting. Do not ask the person for such assistance more than once, so be sure this is a critical issue at the key moment. Three categories of people can help you arrange a meeting or accompany you when you meet with your elected official:

- 1. An influential person in the community** who is sympathetic to your cause and whose views would be valued by the official is good to include in your delegation. Who do you know who is close to that person? Through networking you may be able to ask an influential person to assist you or your group.
- 2. Powerful people in your area** are more invisible than mayors or county council members. A power-structure study conducted by a newspaper or a university political science department may provide a list. You may have heard of one of these individuals or someone in your circle may be acquainted
- 3. Major donors of the elected official.** Many campaign contributions must be reported and become public information. Reports are available on the website of the Federal Elections Commission at www.fec.gov and from FEC's public records office. You can learn who gave major contributions. Is this donor approachable and willing to open doors?

Seek advice from political pros in your community on this strategy and use your time with your legislator wisely. ■

Cobell Suit Update

Bipartisan legislation to repay a half million Native Americans whose money was lost or withheld from them has been introduced in both houses of Congress. Unfortunately, these bills have been stalled by debate over how much of the money owed to individuals will be repaid. The money is revenue from commercial use of 10 million acres of Indian land held in trust by the government. The debate may be practical but is unethical. The billions collected by the government were never the government's money to use for other purposes; it is money owed to Indians.

Meanwhile, the class action suit in federal court (*Cobell v. Kempthorne*, formerly *Cobell v. Norton*) that spurred recent trust management improvements has a chance of success. A victory would hold the federal government—as the banker that managed the Indian money—accountable for its fiduciary duties. However, the Department of Interior is pushing to remove the judge because he has expressed indignation about the century of economic injustice suffered by Indians and the stalling by those who could come to a fair settlement now.

FCNL staff attended the hearing on removing the judge and participated in a rally to end this scandal. Elder Mary Johnson who lives on the Navajo reservation where oil wells have pumped for decades talked about how little money she has received. More details on this landmark case can be found on the FCNL website at: www.fcnl.org/nativeam.