

Statement of Ben Nighthorse Campbell  
Chairman, Committee on Indian Affairs  
Hearing on the Native American Business Development  
Trade Promotion and Tourism Act of 1999 (S.401)

April 21, 1999

Good morning. The Committee on Indian Affairs will come to order. Today we will hear testimony on *the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion and Tourism Act (S.401)*, a bill I introduced along with Senator Inouye earlier this year.

Last week this Committee reviewed the ongoing implementation of the "Welfare Reform" law in Indian country. As we know, despite unprecedented economic growth in the America, most Indian reservations resemble Third World nations: plagued by unemployment, poverty, social problems, and hopelessness. As we work to encourage Indian tribes to administer the new welfare reform block grants, we must be remember that in the end the success of Welfare Reform depends on the availability of jobs.

Some people believe gaming is the answer and is making all tribes rich. It is true that for a handful of tribes located near population centers, gaming has been successful. For the rest, the revenues are more along the lines of church bingo. We must seek other ways to create jobs.

With this bill and other initiatives, we are continuing to address the building blocks of development throughout the session: physical infrastructure, skills development, separation of powers and good governance, regulatory reform, and access to capital. This legislation aims to get the ball rolling by requiring the Commerce Department to make the full menu of business development services available to tribes and businesses on Indian lands.

I am particularly interested in looking at international trade and tourism for the opportunities and markets they present for tribes and Indian entrepreneurs. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses this morning.