

**STATEMENT
OF
SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE
CHAIRMAN
U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
BEFORE THE
FEBRUARY 13, 2002
OVERSIGHT HEARING
ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE
NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING ASSISTANCE
AND
SELF-DETERMINATION ACT**

The Committee meets this afternoon to receive testimony on the implementation of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-determination Act.

Although the act has been in place for only a few years, Tribal Governments and their designated Housing Authorities have identified the circumstances in which the act seems to be working well, and where the act may need amendment.

The Inspector General conducted a review of the implementation of the act, and made some recommendations as to how the Department might better assist Tribes in assuring that the programs authorized by the act are administered with maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

The Inspector General's report emphasized the value of training and technical assistance, but unfortunately, the President's budget request calls for a two million dollar reduction in funds devoted to training and technical assistance.

There seems to be a dispute between the Department and Tribal Governments as to whether the act's requirement of negotiated rulemaking applies not only to the initial promulgation of regulations but to subsequent additions or amendments to the regulations.

Some Tribes are experiencing problems with the section 184 loan guarantee program, and small Tribes have an especially difficult challenge with operating programs under the act given the smaller allocation of funds they receive.

These are just some of the issues that we anticipate hearing about from the witnesses who will present testimony to the Committee today.

So without further ado, may I call upon a gentlemen that we came to know well in Hawaii, and who appears before the Committee today for the first time in his capacity as Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, Mr. Michael Liu.

Mr. Secretary, welcome to the committee.