

Opening Statement of Ben Nighthorse Campbell  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs  
Hearing on the President's FY2005 Budget Request

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

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Good morning. On February 2, 2004, the President submitted to Congress his \$2.23 trillion dollar Budget Request for FY2005.

The Request includes \$10.8 billion for the Interior Department with increases targeted to trust programs, law enforcement, fire management, and others.

This morning the Committee will hear from National Tribal Organizations to get their views on the Request.

On February 25<sup>th</sup>, the Agencies will be in to provide their views on the Request.

For the past several years Indian trust matters have come to dominate the agenda and the budget debate.

It should therefore come as no surprise that a total of \$614 million is requested for the trust-related activities in the Interior Department.

Specifically, funding is requested for

1. historical accounting;
2. departmental reorganization;
3. technology upgrades;
4. records management; and

5. Indian land re-consolidation

In particular, I am encouraged by the requested \$75 million to buy back small parcels of fractionated lands and return them to tribal ownership.

There are a number of other items that need to be discussed in the weeks ahead such as the Indian health request, funding for Indian housing, and the Federal commitment to Indian education.

In the interests of time, I will submit a detailed statement for the Record.

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