



JAMESTOWN S'KLALLAM TRIBE

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Written Testimony of
THE HONORABLE W. RON ALLEN, TRIBAL CHAIRMAN/CEO
JAMESTOWN S'KLALLAM TRIBE submitted to the
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
“2025 Appropriations Testimony for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, BIA/BIE, and IHS”
May 7, 2024

On behalf of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, I am pleased to submit this written testimony on our funding priorities and requests for the Fiscal Year 2025 Department of the Interior (DOI) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and Indian Health Service (IHS) budgets.

The following investments will strengthen Tribal nation-building and support our goal of self-sufficiency:

Tribal Funding Priority - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

- 1. \$1 Million for the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe's Co-Management/Co-Stewardship of the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge**

Tribal Funding Priorities – Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

- 1. \$36.6 Million to Fully Fund and Expand the TIWAHE Initiative**
- 2. \$177.018 Million Increase Funding for Top Ten Tribal Priority Allocations (TPA) and Recurring Base Funding**

Tribal Funding Priorities – Indian Health Service (IHS)

- 1. \$383.64 Million increase over FY2024 enacted to Support Current Services**
- 2. \$10.26 Billion for Purchased & Referred Care**

Tribal and National Funding Priorities - Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), and the Indian Health Service (IHS)

- 1. Advanced Appropriations for Tribal Programs and Services**
- 2. Mandatory Funding for Contract Support Costs (CSC) and Section 105(l) Leases**
- 3. Ensure Agencies are Sufficiently Staffed to Carryout Trust and Treaty Obligations**

Funding for Tribal Nations accounts for approximately 1.16% of the entire Federal budget despite mandatory Federal trust and treaty obligations. Since Tribal programs and services are funded with non-defense discretionary appropriations, the funding levels are severely deficient and unable to address our Tribal communities' unmet needs; and these unfulfilled Federal obligations continue to grow exponentially on an annual basis. As a result, American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) continue to rank near the bottom of all Americans in terms of health, education, and employment status. These harrowing statistics and funding inequities demand a shift in the current governmental appropriations paradigm not only because it is the right thing to

do but because it fails to align with the legally enforceable fiduciary obligation on the part of the United States to protect Tribal treaty rights, lands, resources, and assets.

Congress can take proactive steps to empower Tribal governments, and strengthen Tribal economies, and Indian communities by enacting measures that respect Tribal sovereignty and are truly reflective of the Government-to-Government relationship. First and foremost, expand Tribal Self-Governance and Self-Determination across the Federal system. Self-Governance generates a larger return on the Federal investment and allows for maximum flexibility and better programmatic outcomes at the local level. It is the most effective policy for the economic vitality of Tribal Nations and has proven successful in helping Tribal Nations rebuild, grow, and thrive.

Other measures Congress can adopt to aid in the promotion of Tribal Nation Building and self-sufficiency include, providing mandatory funding for all Tribal programs and services, requiring the Administration to submit on an annual basis the total cost to fully fund trust and treaty obligations, provide direct funding to Tribes, demolish funding silos and create a legal mechanism to allow funding from all sources to be combined and allocated through Self-Governance compacts, increase funding for Tribal priority allocations and other recurring base programs, and ensure there are Tribal set asides for every funding opportunity.

\$1 Million Dollars – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s Co-Management/Co-Stewardship of the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge

Our Tribe has a strong interest in ensuring the health and vitality of the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge (DNWR) ecosystems and request a Federal investment of one million dollars for Jamestown to properly assume and administer our shared mission and goals and to begin to address a range of critical services. The Tribe’s ability to undertake this co-management role is unquestioned and is evidenced by the primary role the Tribe has and continues to play in habitat preservation, conservation, and environmental stewardship of our ancestral homelands, traditional waterways and resources.

The DNWR is part of the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s ancestral homelands. Our Tribal villages were located along the shoreline, and we continue to use and inhabit the Dungeness as we have done since time immemorial. Jamestown has significant historical, cultural, and spiritual connections to these lands and waters and this area is critical to the preservation of our oral history, creation stories, language, ceremonies, spirituality, medicine, and culture. We have an obligation to protect these lands and waters for our future generations, which is why we are partnering with the U.S. FWS by entering into a Co-Management/Co-Stewardship Agreement.

\$36.6 Million to Fully Fund and Expand the TIWAHE Initiative

The TIWAHE Initiative, established in 2015, fosters a dynamic approach to the delivery of services by embracing the Self-Governance/Self-Determination service delivery model that has proven successful in enhancing the health and well-being of Tribal families and communities. Current funding levels support ten (10) demonstration sites, representing sixty-five (65) Tribes. BIA’s one time funding opportunity this past year allowed for planning grants for an additional

twelve (12) TIWAHE Incubator Tribes seeking to become demonstration sites. The TIWAHE budget comprises recurring funding for the demonstration project and various Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) programs, including Social Services, Indian Child Welfare, Tribal Courts, Housing Program, Job Placement & Training, and Public Safety. We urge Congress to provide \$36.6 million to allow for the onboarding of the incubator Tribes and increase funding across several social service/public safety line items to strengthen the initiatives impact and support more Tribal communities in achieving positive outcomes.

Jamestown is one of the incubator Tribes that was awarded \$200,000 in a planning grant that has allowed us to create a synergistic model for the delivery of programs and services that better align with our community customs, values and traditions. Adopting a coordinated approach that is grounded in Tribal values and principles leads to better outcomes at the local level. TIWAHE provides Tribes greater flexibility to build social service infrastructure that functions as all-inclusive and is responsive to addressing a broad range of issues such as poverty, substance abuse, domestic violence, youth suicide and other related issues. The original six demonstration Tribes have achieved significant successes by persevering to improve family well-being and community resilience. We are confident an additional investment of \$36.6 million in the TIWAHE program will prove successful in promoting the development of prosperous, resilient, and self-sufficient Tribal communities.

\$177.018 Million Increase Funding for Top Ten Tribal Priority Allocations (TPA) and Recurring Base Funding

Tribal Priority Allocations (TPA) and Recurring Programs are consistently identified as funding priorities by the Tribal Interior Budget Council (TIBC) because they provide core funding that supports critical government programs and services. Flexibility in the use of funds to support local needs is an important aspect of this funding. TPA and Recurring Program funding provides security and certainty for Tribes rather than funding provided through grant dollars. There has been a growing trend among agencies to fund Tribal programs and services with grant dollars rather than providing base and recurring funding. Grant funding is incongruent with the trust and treaty obligations and Tribal Self-Governance.

\$383.64 Million increase over FY2024 enacted to Increase Support for Current Services

The Federal trust obligation requires significant investment in Tribal healthcare systems. To maintain current services, factors such as the inflationary rate, pay costs, contract support costs, population growth and staffing needs for recently constructed facilities all need to be fully funded. When these mandatory factors are not funded, Tribes must supplement programs with their own limited revenue, or chose between limiting services or shutting down services completely.

\$10.26 Billion Purchased and Referred Care (PRC) –

PRC funds are used to purchase essential health care services, including inpatient and outpatient care, routine emergency ambulatory care, transportation, and medical support services, such as diagnostic imaging, physical therapy, laboratory, nutrition, and pharmacy services. PRC funds are extremely important to the Portland Area Tribes because the Portland Area lacks hospitals

and specialty care centers, so Tribes in the Northwest are forced to turn to the private sector to fulfill this need.

\$8.74 billion Behavioral Health Mental and Alcohol and Substance Abuse –The Jamestown Healing Clinic provides a holistic approach to treatment for those who suffer from opioid use disorder through the provision of wrap-around services, to include, primary care, dental services, transportation to and from the clinic, employment, housing, and other associated needs.

Advance Appropriations for Tribal Programs and Services

Providing appropriations one year in advance for the BIA, BIE and IHS will mitigate the adverse financial effects of Federal budgetary uncertainties and allow Tribes to engage in more effective strategic planning, spend funds more efficiently, grow our Tribal economies and businesses and increase the quality of care and well-being of our Tribal citizens and community. Tribal Nations are resilient but the continuous delays and/or lapse in Federal appropriations continues to disrupt the execution of Tribal government operations. The Federal government has a legal and moral obligation to make sure that funding for trust and treaty obligations is not delayed. Time is of the essence when it comes to the survival of our people, our language, our culture, our homelands and resources and our sovereignty. Advance appropriation is a budgetary solution that does not impact spending caps and allows Tribes to continue to provide critical services.

Reclassify Discretionary Spending for Section 105(l) Leases and Contract Support Costs to Mandatory

The agencies are legally required to compensate Tribes for Section 105(l) lease obligations and contract support costs (CSC) in accordance with the ISDEAA, but these obligations have grown tremendously since their inception. As far back as 2014, Congress acknowledged that obligations of this nature are typically addressed under mandatory appropriations because they have the potential to impact other programs. Separate, indefinite accounts were established to support Section 105(l) leases and CSC but have resulted in the unintended reduction of funding for critical Tribal programs. Reclassifying mandatory funding for CSC and 105(l) leases is needed to prevent programmatic decreases.

Ensure Agencies are Sufficiently Staffed to Carryout Trust and Treaty Obligations

Retention and recruitment of staff continues to be a challenge for our Federal Agency partners. The Federal government must have competitive hiring packages and effective and efficient recruitment practices in place. The impacts of an understaffed workforce trickle down to the Tribal level with severe consequences – funding distribution is delayed, and the processing of paperwork and other essential transactions impede Tribal programs and services. In addition, many of the Agencies, such as the BIA have taken on additional responsibilities associated with the number of new initiatives to include 477, Missing and Murdered, TIWAHE, 105(l) Leases, Federal Indian Boarding School, and others requiring additional staff and funding.

The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe continues to support the requests and recommendations of our Regional and National Indian Organizations. Thank you.