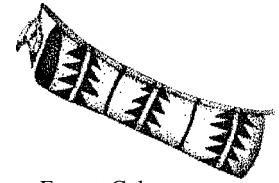




## HOOPA VALLEY TRIBAL COUNCIL

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Everett Colegrove  
Vice-Chairman

TESTIMONY OF  
JILL SHERMAN-WARNE, COUNCILMEMBER  
HOOPA VALLEY TRIBE  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES  
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE PROGRAMS  
ON THE FY 2025 BUDGET FOR THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
MAY 7, 2024

Honorable Subcommittee Chairman Simpson, Ranking Member Chellie Pingree, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony. On behalf of the Hoopa Valley Tribal Council and our recognized citizens, I submit this request for funding in the FY25 Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) budget and the need for increased funding beyond our FY24 submitted testimony of \$10.4 Million for a total Tribal request. This year we request to increase the amount to \$20.8 Million for the Hoopa Tribe and request the Committee to initiate a plan for advanced appropriations for the BIA.

The Hoopa Valley Tribe is located in the mountainous region of Northern California within Humboldt County, California. The Hoopa Indian Reservation is the largest reservation within California and encompasses over 144 square miles with close to 90,000 acres held in trust. Congressional Acts in 1988 Hoopa-Yurok Settlement Act and 1997 Hoopa South Boundary Correction affirmed the Hoopa Tribe's jurisdiction over its lands and corrected long-standing wrongs to the Hoopa Tribe. Since the formation of the reservation the Hoopa Tribe sought to regain ancestral territory to its stewardship and protection. Recently with the help of numerous private donors and the State of California, the Hoopa Tribe purchased 10,395 acres of ancestral territory returning a sacred mountain back into our stewardship and protection. This \$14.1 Million dollar purchase is a momentous occasion, and we are hosting a celebration on May 14, 2024, and I invite you to attend.

The Hoopa Tribe is one of the largest employers within Humboldt County contributing nearly \$500,000 of payroll into the Humboldt County economy every two weeks. Hoopa provides the only ambulatory service for Northeastern Humboldt County. Additionally, several of our Tribal law enforcement officers are cross deputized with the Humboldt County Sheriff thereby providing additional policing to this area.

**Testimony of Jill Sherman, Councilwoman  
Hoopa Valley Tribe**

The Hoopa Tribe recognizes 3606 enrolled members as citizens of the Hoopa Tribe. As you know, Tribal citizenship is a political status not a racial identity. The Federal Trust relationship is supported in the US Constitution, Congressional Acts and in Supreme Court Decisions.

Last year the Hoopa Tribe submitted specific requests for increases in the following areas: Law Enforcement, Emergency Services, Social Services Indian Child Welfare, Forestry, Wildland Fire, Fisheries, Irrigation, PUD O & M, IHS Clinic Staffing and Recruitment and Emergency Medical Services. While that request remains, it must be said the Tribe requested the minimum needed to just get the Tribe by until the next annual appropriation. It is well past time we asked for more than a minimum. For example, last year we asked for \$750,000 for irrigation which increases the base funding from \$47,000 but the actual need is closer to \$10.5 million dollars if we are going to repair and replace failing portions of the system to ensure it is usable. Doubling our FY24 budget requests will ensure we can accomplish more than band-aiding the need.

As you know in 2003 the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights published, ***A Quiet Crisis: Federal Funding and Unmet Needs in Indian Country***. This report thoroughly evaluated budget and spending of federal agencies to American Indians and Alaskan Natives and the report simply confirmed what we as Tribes already know—we are severely underfunded and underserved. This report was updated in 2018 and given a new title, ***Broken Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans***. These reports well documented the failure of the federal government (Congress) to meet its treaty obligations and trust responsibilities as well as identifying the stagnated funding levels for the past 15 years. The Hoopa Tribe can well document that federal funding levels received from the BIA has remained stagnated at 1989 levels (35 years). For example, our base funding to support Wildland Fire remains at \$750,000 yet each year the cost of wildland fires has grown exponentially due to longer fire seasons and costly response. The base BIA funding should be closer to \$4 million.

There is a great need to develop a system for advanced appropriations for the BIA. Unfortunately like most other federal agencies this past September we were making plans for a Tribal Government Shut-down due to Congressional Budget delays. It seems to have become business as usual with Congress enacting Continuing Resolutions (CRs) which causes uncertainty and instability in Tribal Government operations. Never have Tribes received advanced funding and even as a leading Self-Governance Tribe timely and assured funding is necessary. Even then, with assured funding it may not be received by the Tribe for over 5 months which means as a Tribe we limp along until we receive the funding.

**Testimony of Jill Sherman, Councilwoman  
Hoopa Valley Tribe**

Hoopa is not the first to bring forward a request for advanced appropriations in the BIA for Tribes. This message has been delivered over and over as far back as 2012 by my research. Thankfully, such appropriations have been authorized for Indian Health Services. We thank you for that wise decision. Advanced appropriations for the BIA would prevent Tribal Government destabilization of water service, law enforcement, wildfire, emergency services, housing, social services, Indian child welfare and most importantly tribal government services.

In closing, I thank you for allowing the Hoopa Valley Tribe to present oral testimony and I am willing to answer any questions you may have.