

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 24, 2002

The Honorable Mitch Daniels  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20503

The Honorable Hector V. Barreto  
Administrator  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
409 Third Street S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20416

Dear Honorable Sirs:

We are writing to urge that the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Tribal Business Information Centers (TBIC) receive \$2.5 million and a specific "line-item" in President Bush's Fiscal Year 2003 budget request.

As you know, sustainable economic development on Tribal Lands has often been difficult to achieve. One important way to help Native Americans who live on reservations is to provide them with assistance to open and run their own small businesses. Doing so not only instills a sense of pride in the owner and his or her community, it also brings much needed job opportunities, as well as other economic benefits.

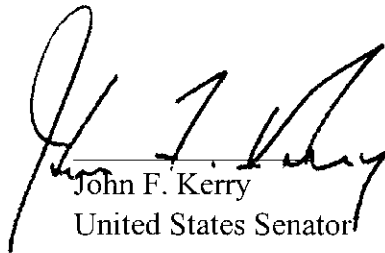
In 1995, the SBA was granted \$1.2 million in funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to start the TBIC program. Since then, the program has struggled to achieve its mission due to inadequate resources. Currently, Tribal Lands in only six states are served under the program, despite repeated requests from Tribal Leaders elsewhere for additional TBICs. The lack of resources means that the 16 current TBICs have received an average of only \$33,000 in funding, to cover all expenses, including staffing. Although designed to provide culturally tailored business development assistance to prospective and current small business owners on reservations, the lack of resources has hampered this program from meeting its promise to the Native American community.

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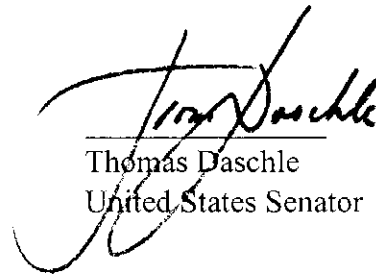
Therefore, we urge you to include \$2.5 million for the TBIC program and include it as a line-item in the President's request so that it may grow beyond its current numbers and provide the full range of services it was designed to offer.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. Please feel free to contact us, or have your staffs contact John DaSilva of Senator Kerry's Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee staff at (202) 224-5175.

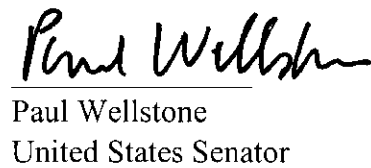
Sincerely,



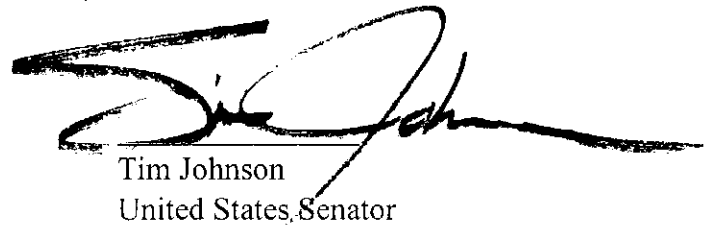
John F. Kerry  
United States Senator



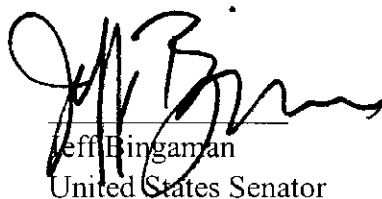
Thomas Daschle  
United States Senator



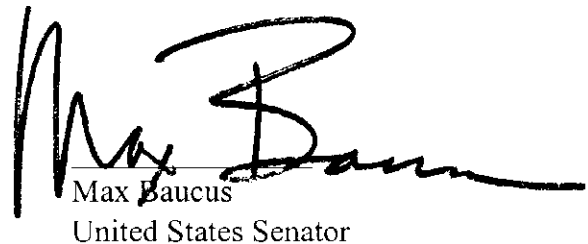
Paul Wellstone  
United States Senator



Tim Johnson  
United States Senator



Jeff Bingaman  
United States Senator



Max Baucus  
United States Senator