

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 22, 2002

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

Dear Administrator Barreto:

We are writing to strongly urge that the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Tribal Business Information Centers (TBIC) receive the necessary funding to continue operations for Fiscal Year 2002.

As you know, sustainable economic development in Indian country 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 provides much-needed job opportunities, as well as other economic benefits to Native communities.

The TBIC program is one of only a handful of Federal programs designed to start and assist small businesses located in Indian country. Unless funding is found for this program, the Federal government will be failing to carry out its responsibilities to Native Americans and causing great economic harm to communities served by the TBIC program.

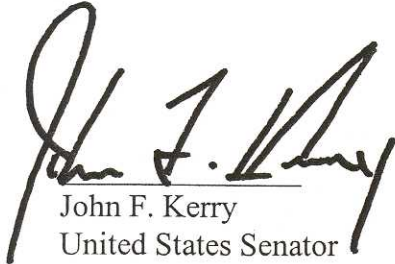
We understand that for a meager \$200,000, the TBIC program would have enough resources to remain operational for Fiscal Year 2002. Once that funding has been secured, it is our hope that the SBA's request for resources for Native American outreach initiatives will receive funding in the Fiscal Year 2003 Commerce, Justice, State, Judiciary and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Therefore, we strongly urge you to locate and begin the reprogramming process for the necessary funding to continue operation of the TBIC program.

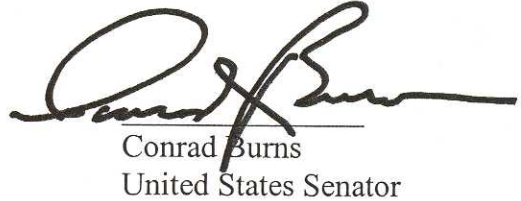
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March 22, 2002

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

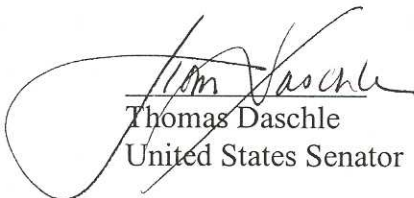
Sincerely,



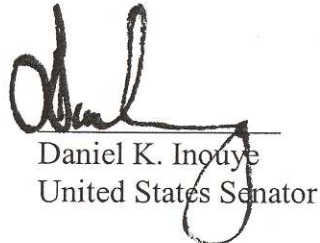
John F. Kerry
United States Senator



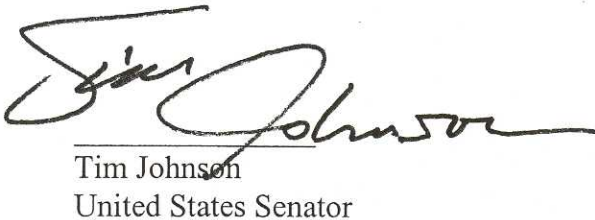
Conrad Burns
United States Senator



Thomas Daschle
United States Senator



Daniel K. Inouye
United States Senator



Tim Johnson
United States Senator



Max Baucus
United States Senator



Byron L. Dorgan
United States Senator



Paul Wellstone
United States Senator



John Edwards
United States Senator



Mark Dayton
United States Senator