

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Please Join us in Introducing Legislation to Help Foster Native American Business Ownership:

Cosponsor the
Native American Business Development Act

Dear Colleague:

We are writing to ask you to join us in introducing the Native American Business Development Act.

Today, many Native Americans face the dual burdens of economic hardship and a lack of opportunity. Unfortunately, the Federal government has been slow in responding to the challenges of promoting business development in Native American communities.

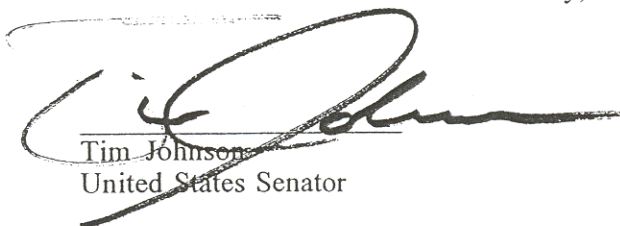
One important way to help Native Americans is to provide them with assistance to open and run their own small businesses. Doing so not only instills a sense of pride in the owner and his or her community, it also brings much needed job opportunities, as well as other economic benefits. By working with leaders in the Native American community, we have identified several meaningful opportunities for the federal government to assist Native American entrepreneurs to succeed.

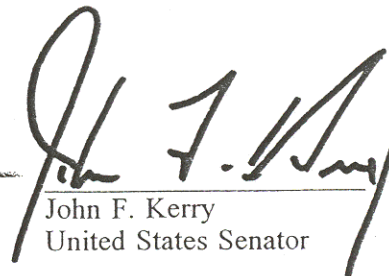
The legislation we are planning to introduce will provide the Federal government with the necessary tools to assist Native American communities with small business ownership and development. Our legislation will:

- make the Office of Native American Affairs at the Small Business Administration statutory;
- establish a financial and resource assistance grant program to fund Native American Business Centers in Native American Communities, which would provide culturally tailored business development assistance to Native Americans; and
- establish two pilot programs for American Indian communities in an attempt to try new and creative solutions to overcome the economic hardships faced by American Indian s living on reservations.

We hope you will join us in introducing this legislation. The deadline for cosponsorship is Friday, April 19, 2002. Please feel free to contact us, or have your staff contact Dean Meinen of Senator Johnson's staff at (202) 224-5842. Thank you for your attention to this critically important issue.

Sincerely,


Tim Johnson
United States Senator


John F. Kerry
United States Senator