



USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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Transmitted Electronically

October 26, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Retain Tribal Funding in Reconciliation Bill

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Speaker Pelosi,

We write on behalf of United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF) to urge the preservation of at least \$20.5 billion in direct funding for Indian Country and other Tribal provisions in the forthcoming budget reconciliation bill. While we understand that overall spending under the reconciliation bill must be reduced in order to gain additional votes, this cannot and should not be accomplished to the detriment of Tribal Nations and your trust and treaty obligations as federal officials.

USET SPF is a non-profit, inter-tribal organization advocating on behalf of thirty-three (33) federally recognized Tribal Nations from the Northeastern Woodlands to the Everglades and across the Gulf of Mexico.¹ USET SPF is dedicated to promoting, protecting, and advancing the inherent sovereign rights and authorities of Tribal Nations and in assisting its membership in dealing effectively with public policy issues

The Build Back Better agenda is meant to leave a lasting legacy on America's physical, social, and economic landscape. As you seek opportunities to lower the cost of the bill, we urge you to consider the impacts of failing fully include Tribal Nations and our citizens among the beneficiaries of long-term investments in the fabric of this country. This will only exacerbate centuries of unfulfilled obligations and broken promises, many of which have come into horrifyingly sharper focus as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ USET SPF member Tribal Nations include: Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (TX), Aroostook Band of Micmac Indians (ME), Catawba Indian Nation (SC), Cayuga Nation (NY), Chickahominy Indian Tribe (VA), Chickahominy Indian Tribe—Eastern Division (VA), Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (NC), Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians (ME), Jena Band of Choctaw Indians (LA), Mashantucket Pequot Indian Tribe (CT), Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe (MA), Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida (FL), Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MS), Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut (CT), Monacan Indian Nation (VA), Nansemond Indian Nation (VA), Narragansett Indian Tribe (RI), Oneida Indian Nation (NY), Pamunkey Indian Tribe (VA), Passamaquoddy Tribe at Indian Township (ME), Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point (ME), Penobscot Indian Nation (ME), Poarch Band of Creek Indians (AL), Rappahannock Tribe (VA), Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (NY), Seminole Tribe of Florida (FL), Seneca Nation of Indians (NY), Shinnecock Indian Nation (NY), Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe (VA) and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) (MA).

Because there is Strength in Unity

We urge you—in the strongest possible terms—to reconsider any cuts to the funding identified for Tribal Nations and instead fight to ensure we are meaningfully included in any final agreement.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Francis', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kirk Francis
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kitcki A. Carroll', written in a cursive style.

Kitcki A. Carroll
Executive Director