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In December 2001, the General Accounting Office (GAO) released a report entitled *Federal Assistance Programs for American Indians and Alaska Natives* that identified 100 federal programs available to tribes, or their members, for economic development activities.

McCaleb also cited President Bush's new initiative to reduce forest fires by thinning overgrowth and re-seeding burned areas as an opportunity for tribal businesses. "For years, many Indian firefighters have risked their lives to protect homes, families and communities across the country from the devastating effects of forest fires," said McCaleb. "Tribes that provide forest thinning and re-seeding services could save lives and property, and provide new employment opportunities for their members, as well."

The 2002 National Summit on Emerging Tribal Economies provided a venue for over 100 successful Indian businesses to promote themselves to new audiences, network with prospective business partners and learn about resources that can support their business plans.

The Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs has responsibility for fulfilling the Department's trust responsibility to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and individuals, as well as promoting tribal self-determination and economic development. The Assistant Secretary oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which is responsible for providing services to approximately 1.4 million American Indians and Alaska Natives and the nation's 562 Federally recognized tribes.

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