United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Tribal Leader,

JUL 25 2011

One of my top priorities in this Administration is improving the delivery of services to Indian Country. At many of our meetings, both internally and in Indian Country, one of the main topics brought to my attention is the administrative functions servicing the Indian Affairs organization. To this end, Indian Affairs, in partnership with the Department of the Interior Office of Policy Management and Budget (PMB), has begun an organizational assessment to assess functionality, performance and customer support to determine if there are ways to improve how Indian Affairs delivers services to Indian Country.

This assessment will initially begin with an evaluation of the recommendations issued in the 1999 National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) report titled "A Study of Management and Administration: The Bureau of Indian Affairs." The NAPA study concentrated on management, support, and administrative responsibilities throughout the Bureau of Indian Affairs and highlighted a number of weaknesses and management issues and served as the cornerstone for changes in the organization. The assessment will focus on the current status of the organization, the degree to which improvements were implemented, the adequacy of service levels and resources, and opportunities for more effective and efficient operations.

The assessment will be conducted by the Bronner Group, LLC, a small woman-owned business based in Chicago that specializes in consulting with the Government and the public sector. The $407,000 contract was awarded on June 20, 2011. In addition, the assessment and recommendations are scheduled to be finalized by the end of October 2011. Based upon our duty to consult with tribes, one of the key components of the contract requirements was that the contractor must obtain input from Indian Affairs employees and tribal leaders on their views on recommended changes to the Indian Affairs organization. As a result, Indian Affairs will be adding sessions to the following meetings to obtain your input. Details for these sites are as follows:

August 3, 2011 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Suicide Summit National Conference (BIA/BIE/IHS) Hyatt Regency Scottsdale 7500 E. Doubletree Ranch Road Scottsdale, Arizona 85258 (480) 444-1234
August 9, 2011 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Partners in Action Conference, hosted by the BIA Midwest Region Grand Casino Hinkley Conference Center 777 Lady Luck Drive Hinckley, Minnesota 55037 (800) 472-6321

The assessment will be focused on the following areas: accounting/finance; budget; acquisitions/contracting (non-P.L. 93-638); property management; safety management; human resources; facilities management; and environmental management.

Due to the importance of this effort, we have a tight timeframe for the contractor to complete the assessment. To ensure we obtain as much input as possible, in addition to attending the above noted meetings, Indian Affairs is working on other avenues to obtain input such as input via the internet. More information will be forthcoming as details are confirmed.

We are approaching this assessment in an unbiased and balanced manner that will result in sound recommendations of alternatives and an outcome that will best support the ongoing programs in Indian Affairs and the delivery of services to Indian Country. We invite you to offer constructive suggestions to build a stronger, more effective and efficient organization that helps us meet our Federal trust responsibilities.

Thank you for your attention in this matter and I look forward to receiving your feedback.

Sincerely,

Larry Echo Hawk

Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs