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UDALL HAILS ZUNI TAX AS FORCE FOR TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Interior Secretary Stewart L. Udall today congratulated the Zuni Indian Tribe of New Mexico for their initiative in passing one of the first Indian Sales Taxes collected primarily from Indians.

In placing a one percent tax upon themselves, Udall said, in a letter to Zuni Tribal Governor Robert E. Lewis, the Zuni Tribe has realized "that its local government cannot be a potent force for improvement unless it is able to carry its fair share of needed educational, industrial, social, health and community development program costs."

The Zuni's willingness to tax themselves will encourage those working with them in Federal and State Government programs "to new and greater effort to meet your goals," Udall said. "Your actions should stand as a guidepost for many other tribes who share your aspirations for Indian development."

Udall noted that the new tax was one of 24 goals cited in a recently released tribal plan for 24 improvement projects over the next 24 months. The plan, he said, is further evidence of "a Zuni desire to build a Pueblo into a place of beauty, opportunity, dignity, and security for all who would continue the heritage of an ancient and honored culture."

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