

# DOI SELF-GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

c/o Self-Governance Communication and Education

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Original Sent USPS

April 3, 2015

Michael S. Black, Director  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Office of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
MS 4606  
1849 C Street, N.W  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: Report on Budget Needs of Tribal Courts in P.L. 83-280 States

Dear Director Black:

On behalf of the Department of the Interior Self-Governance Advisory Committee (DOI-SGAC) and the 261 Self-Governance Tribes it represents, I request a status report regarding the Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) progress in developing a report to Congress on the funding needs of *Tribal Courts* in P.L. 83-280 states.

As you know, this report was required by the Explanatory Statement published by Chairman Harold Rogers of the House Committee on Appropriations in regard to the "Cromnibus" appropriations bill for FY2015, Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015 (H.R 83; P.L. 113-235). The Explanatory Statement is the equivalent of a Conference Report. The particular language is found in Division F, page 28, for the Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee.

It reads as follows:

"Public Safety and Justice--- ...The Indian Law and Order Commission's November 2013 report notes that Federal investment in tribal justice for Public Law 83-280 States has been more limited than elsewhere in Indian country. Within 180 days of enactment of this Act, the Bureau, in coordination with the Department of Justice, is directed to report to the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction on the budgetary needs of tribal courts in these States. The needs assessment should take into consideration possible joint support among tribes and villages for tribal courts services when appropriate."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from Explanatory Statement for the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY2015, P.L. 113-235, page 28

The Act was enacted on December 16, 2014; so three months of the 180 day period have already passed. We would greatly appreciate information about the BIA's progress in developing this report, its coordination with the Department of Justice, and the methodology being used. Are any Tribal consultations planned within P.L. 83-280 states? Can the SGAC member Tribes assist in this effort?

We look forward to your response. If you have any questions, please contact me at (206) 369-6699 or by email at [rallen@jamestowntribe.org](mailto:rallen@jamestowntribe.org).

Sincerely,



W. Ron Allen, Chairman/CEO, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, and  
Chairman of the Self-Governance Advisory Committee

cc: Kevin Washburn, Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs  
Sharee Freeman, Director, Office of Self-Governance (OSG)  
SGAC Members and Technical Workgroup Members