

RED LAKE BAND of CHIPPEWA INDIANS

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March 26, 2009

The Honorable Collin Peterson
2211 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20050

Dear Congressman Peterson:

As Chairman of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians, I write to you today seeking your continued support of a specific appropriations request for the Red Lake Indian reservation in northern Minnesota.

The Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (the "Tribe") is located in north-central Minnesota, with a land base consisting of approximately 850,000 acres and covering 1,259 square miles. The reservation has a growing resident population of approximately 6,000.

The Tribe is seeking appropriations in the amount of \$2,525,000 for the design, construction and buildout of a multipurpose facility. The facility would be located in the remote reservation community of Ponemah and would provide a permanent home for tribal youth programs and the elderly nutrition program.

There are currently 130 registered children that participate in afterschool activities in the current facility. The average daily attendance is limited to approximately 45 tribal children due to space constraints. The youth program's activities revolve around five core component areas as follows:

- **Health and Life Skills:** This component helps youth develop their capacity to engage in positive behaviors that nurture their own well-being, set personal goals and develop the competencies to live successfully as self-sufficient adults.
- **Education and Career Development:** This component enables youth to become proficient in basic educational disciplines, apply learning to everyday situations and embrace technology to optimize employability.
- **The Arts and Cultural Activities:** This component enables youth to develop their creativity and cultural awareness through knowledge and appreciation of visual and tactile arts and crafts, performing arts, creative writing, photography, and music.
- **Character and Leadership Development:** This component empowers youth to support and influence their Club and community, sustain meaningful relationship with others, develop a positive self-image, participate in the democratic process and respect to their own and others' cultural identities.

- **Sports, Fitness, and Recreation:** This component helps develop fitness, positive use of leisure time, skills for stress management, appreciation for the environment, social and interpersonal skills.

The programs that are provided include Power Hour, SMART Moves, Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T), Together Raising Awareness for Indian Life (T.R.A.I.L.), a diabetes prevention program, and a community-serving organic market place using the organic fish compost from the tribal fishery.

The current facility for these programs is a small trailer house that the Red Lake School District rents to the program for \$1.00/year. Because of the extremely limited space available to serve the reservation youth, the number of youth the programs can serve is also limited. In order to maximize the number of youth that are allowed to participate, the youth program staff carefully schedule services and utilize shared gymnasium space in a separate location.

The current Ponemah community center was condemned in 2007 and is no longer a safe alternative location for tribal youth programs.

The elderly nutrition program currently serves an average of 80 tribal members per day. Again, due to the remoteness of the community and other geographical constraints, this is an invaluable tribal nutrition program for the Ponemah community's elders. In addition to the nutritional value of the program, there are important socialization opportunities provided for the community's elders as well.

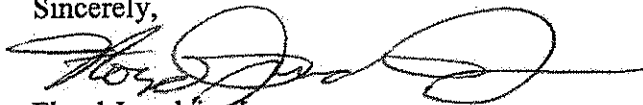
As was highlighted in the aftermath of the high school shooting tragedy on the Red Lake Indian Reservation, the after school and programmatic options for the reservation's children are limited. The community of Ponemah, located between the Upper and Lower Red Lake basins is the most remote of the reservations' communities. Because of the geographical remoteness of the community, the children there are in the greatest need of youth programs and afterschool options.

Specifically, the tribe is seeking additional appropriations for this worthy reservation project from the following account:

- The EDI account of the FY 2010 Transportation, Treasury, HUD appropriations bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact me or our Washington, D.C. representative Holly Cook Macarro if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Floyd Jourdain, Jr.
Tribal Chairman