UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

NATIVE AMERICAN EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COUNCIL

MEETING

TUESDAY
JUNE 15, 2021

The Federal Advisory Council met virtually at 12:00 p.m., Darrell Waldron, Chair, presiding.

PRESENT
DARRELL WALDRON, Region 1 & 2, Chair
JACOB BERNAL, Region 6, Vice Chair
KIM KANIATOBE CARROLL, Other Disciplines, Secretary
CHRISTINE CAMPBELL, Region 5
LORA ANN CHAISSON, Region 4
PATRICIA HIBBELER, Region 6
JOE HOBOT, Region 5
MATTHEW LAMONT, Other Disciplines
CANDACE LOWRY, Region 3
ERWIN PAHMAHMIE, JR., Region 4
JOSEPH QUINTANA, Region 6
GARY RICKARD, Region 6
KAY SEVEN, Other Disciplines
WINONA WHITMAN, Region 6
ALSO PRESENT

ATHENA BROWN, Designated Federal Official
DUANE HALL, DINAP Subject Matter Expert
SUZAN G. LEVINE, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA
BRYAN NEWLAND, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, U.S. DOI
IAN RECORD, PhD, National Congress of American Indians
MORGAN RODMAN, Executive Director, White House Council on Native American Affairs
KIM VITELLI, Office of Workforce Investment
HON. MARTIN J. WALSH, Secretary of Labor
LIBBY WASHBURN, Special Assistant to the President for Native Affairs, White House Domestic Policy Council
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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

12:00 p.m.

CHAIR WALDRON: Welcome everybody. We have a great lineup. There's been a lot of work done for you. Special thanks too, I think, for hosting with all the electronics that are in Tribal Tech today to get up for stimulating questions.

So, without further ado, I'm going to ask Walter Celestine to give us a blessing, please.

MS. BROWN: Walter, you're on mute. You're still on mute.

MR. CELESTINE: Can you hear me now?

MS. BROWN: Yes.

MR. CELESTINE: Okay. Sorry about that. Okay.

(Native language spoken) Amen.


CHAIR WALDRON: At this point, I'm going to turn this over to Tribal Tech, on the technologies that we have to offer. So, Athena.
MS. BROWN: Thank you, Darrell. Good afternoon, or good afternoon, everyone. Just a few things for this meeting. This is a public meeting of the Native American Employment and Training Council. This meeting is subject to the rules of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The meeting is facilitated by the Council Chair, Darrell Waldron, in his absence, Jacob Bernal, the Vice Chair.

The meeting is being recorded verbatim. Please note that the Chair must first recognize anyone requesting to speak, and right after I finish speaking, Tribal Tech, the contractor, will go over tips and tricks for the Council Members so that you know how to raise your hand and be recognized.

So, before the Council Members speak, please state your name clearly, the region that you represent, or the discipline that you represent for recording purposes.

And also, during the meeting, we ask that only the Council Members or individuals
announced and recognized by Darrell, the Chair, should speak during the meeting.

Members of the public should hold their comment until Day 2, June 16th at 3 o'clock. And that's tomorrow when we have set the public comment session.

So now, I'd like to turn this over to the Tribal Tech contractor to go over some navigation tips for everyone. Thank you.

MS. ECHOHAWK: Thank you, Athena. And thank you for joining us, everyone. My name is BC EchoHawk, and I would just give you a few tips. I know many of us have become very used to using virtual platforms, including Zoom. If you raise your hand, we will let Darrell know, and he can call on you. We'll be tracking that.

Also, if you have a comment in the chatbox, you can just enter it in there. The raised hand function is in different places depending on your version. I am the host of this meeting and I want to apologize because I don't see it on mine. So, I know a few people have
used it.

If anyone would like to try it, I can lower your hand. If anyone needs help finding that icon, we'll help you out there. Typically, it's in reactions, or a lot of times it's in the choices, right under your participant place there. And we'll let Darrell know.

Otherwise, I would just remind you to stay muted while we are recording and the Court Reporter is on. And if you have any questions right now, please let us know. Be happy to answer them. Thank you.

CHAIR WALDRON: Yes, are there any questions?

MS. BROWN: Yeah, I'm looking for the raised hand function, now. Where did you say it might be?

MS. ECHOHAWK: In reactions, which is as you hover across your screen, will pop up, either across the top of the bottom.

MS. BROWN: Oh, okay. Thank you.

MEMBER CARROLL: I checked reactions.
MS. BROWN: Yes, Kim?

MEMBER CARROLL: I'm sorry, Kim Carroll, other disciplines. I checked reactions and I found a wave, and a thumbs up, things like that. But not, a raised hand.

MS. ECHOHAWK: Okay.

CHAIR WALDRON: It's under participants.

MS. ECHOHAWK: Yeah. So, you can hit the participant's icon, and that will open up a box to the side.

MEMBER CARROLL: There, there we go. I see some folks trying it out now.

CHAIR WALDRON: So, if there aren't any questions, so, the Chair wants to recognize the DFO, which is Athena Brown, and turn it back to her for opening comments at this time. Athena?

MS. BROWN: Oh, Darrell. So, the meeting will officially begin. And I'll turn it over to Darrell Waldron, the Chair, to start the meeting.
CHAIR WALDRON: Great. Thanks everybody. We're happy that folks have taken their time to be with us and hope to have a lively, full discussion from our native community out here, and our different groups and areas. So I'm very excited. There is a very impressive lineup in our agenda today. And we're going to move into roll call, then acceptance of the agenda.

So, Kim Carroll, would you please do roll call?

MEMBER CARROLL: Thank you, Darrell.

MEMBER CARROLL: Region 1 and 2, Darrell Waldron.

CHAIR WALDRON: Yeah.

MEMBER CARROLL: Region 2, Chief Ann Richardson.

Region 3, Candace Lowry.

MEMBER LOWRY: Present.

MEMBER CARROLL: Region 4, Lora Ann Chaisson.

MEMBER CHAISSON: Here.
MEMBER CARROLL: Region 4, Tina has resigned is my understanding.

CHAIR WALDRON: Yes.

MEMBER CARROLL: Region 4, Erwin Pahmahmie. Pahmahmie.

MEMBER PAHMAHMIE: Here. Thank you.

MEMBER CARROLL: Okay, Region 5, Christine Campbell.

MEMBER CAMPBELL: Present.

MEMBER CARROLL: Region 5, Dr. Joe Hobot.

MEMBER ROBOT: Present.

MEMBER CARROLL: Region 6, Jacob Bernal.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Present.

MEMBER CARROLL: Region 6, Patricia Hibbeler.

Region 6, Joseph Quintana.

MEMBER QUINTANA: Present.

MEMBER CARROLL: Region 6, Gary Rickard.

Region 6, Michael Tucker.
Region 6, Winona Whitman.

MEMBER WHITMAN: Present.

MEMBER CARROLL: Other disciplines,

Kim Carroll. I'm present.

MEMBER CARROLL: Other disciplines,

Matt Lamont.

MEMBER LAMONT: Present.

MEMBER CARROLL: Other disciplines,

Kay Seven.

MEMBER SEVEN: Present.

MEMBER CARROLL: And we have a quorum.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you. Secretary Carroll. That leads into to our first motion, on the advanced minutes, that you have some version of it. Is there a motion to approve?

MEMBER PAHMAHMIE: I will.

CHAIR WALDRON: I hear Pahmahmie, second it?

MEMBER PAHMAHMIE: Yeah, I will second.

CHAIR WALDRON: Who's seconding?

MEMBER PAHMAHMIE: Did I motion, or
was it Shayne Del Cohen?

CHAIR WALDRON: I have you making the first motion. And I will accept a second.

MEMBER SEVEN: I'll second, Kay Seven.

CHAIR WALDRON: Seven. Are there any questions?

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of aye.)

CHAIR WALDRON: Opposed? Abstentions?

Passes unanimously.

Moving onto June and approval of the agenda. Take a quick moment to review the agenda, any discussion about the agenda and additional change to the agenda, now is that time.

MEMBER SEVEN: This is Kay. I have a question.

CHAIR WALDRON: Say it to the record, again, nice and clear.

MEMBER SEVEN: I'm Kay Seven.

CHAIR WALDRON: Go ahead.
MEMBER SEVEN: So, on the agenda I have a question for the NAETC, to the Department of Labor. Will our group be, get a summary of the written comments submitted to the Department of Labor this past two, three-month period on tribal consultation and the Indian labor force report?

CHAIR WALDRON: Are you looking to add that to the agenda?

MEMBER SEVEN: I want to recommend that we add it the agenda, should the Department of Labor be ready to prepare a summary statement.

CHAIR WALDRON: We've heard an amendment to the agenda to add a statement of summary from the Department of Labor, so, could the Department of Labor so move to do that at this time? This would be a change to the agenda today?

I don't know if you can ask for a second on something that we may not be able to do today. DFO, should I put the question here or a response to the Labor Department take the
question? What do you want to say to that?

MS. BROWN: Darrell, can you repeat that? For some reason your voice is not coming through clearly, so I hear bits and pieces. I don't know if it's just my sound or yours.

CHAIR WALDRON: So, we --

MEMBER WHITMAN: I too am having a problem hearing Darrell.

CHAIR WALDRON: Okay. I'll move a little closer.

I'll try the call again. Is that any better?

MS. BROWN: Yes.

CHAIR WALDRON: Great. So, Kay has put a motion on, she's intended to put a motion on the floor to get a report from the Department of Labor on, comments I guess -- Kay, could you repeat specifically, your question?

MEMBER SEVEN: Yes. Can we add to the agenda, a summary statement from the Department of Labor on the written comments submitted? One was the comments from Tribes on tribal
consultation. And then we had a second request
to submit comments on the Indian labor force
report. And these are both April dates.

CHAIR WALDRON: Were you able to hear
that, Athena?

MS. BROWN: Yes, I did. And I will
forward your request, the language in your
request to Wayne Gordon, who will be giving a
report out tomorrow, and he can include that in
his comments to the Council.

CHAIR WALDRON: So, hear that, Kay?

You're on mute.

MEMBER SEVEN: Thank you.

CHAIR WALDRON: So, that's been
resolved. Are there any comments to the agenda,
change?

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Darrell, this is
Jacob, Region 6.

CHAIR WALDRON: Jacob Bernal, Region
6.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Many of the
Council Members just received the transition
paper yesterday. Would it possible to put that on a discussion or action item for this meeting?

CHAIR WALDRON: All right. So, Jacob is requesting that the transition paper that was sent forward, that could appear on the agenda today? Is there a second to that?

MEMBER CARROLL: I'll second, Kim.

CHAIR WALDRON: Okay, it's seconded by Kim. Any discussion?

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of aye.)

CHAIR WALDRON: Opposed? Abstention?

Okay. Unanimously we'll find a spot to fit it in today, Jacob.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Thank you.

CHAIR WALDRON: If there are no other changes, the Chair will accept a motion for approval or non-approval of the minutes.

Is there a motion to approve the minutes of our last meeting?

MEMBER CARROLL: I move to approve.
CHAIR WALDRON: There's a motion moved by Kim Carroll, is there a second?

MEMBER WHITMAN: I second that motion, Winona Whitman.

CHAIR WALDRON: Winona Whitman, seconded, any discussion?

All those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of aye.)

CHAIR WALDRON: Opposed? Abstention?

Carries unanimously.

We have our first speaker, whom I have some introduction, but we all know him very well, I presume. Ian has worked with our program for quite a few years. And we've been happy to have him on board. Dr. Ian Record is the Director of the Partnership for Tribal Governance, known as PTG, of the National Congress of American Indians, NCAI.

Dr. Record has been instrumental working with tribes to strengthen the governance systems, he's also the lead researcher and
developer of Tribal Workforce Development, the
special tribal toolkit that we have all used,
right?

As you probably know, NCAI is the
oldest and largest Indian organization in the
United States, representing all tribes. Thank
you for being with us, and you are on, sir.

DR. RECORD: Thank you, Darrell, so
much for having me. And thank you to all the
NAETC Members, again, for welcoming me back to
these meetings.

It's good to reconnect with everyone
and always a little daunting to talk about an
issue that I know you guys know far more about
than I ever will. I know, as I've mentioned to
Athena many times, I know enough to be dangerous.
And so, I'll try to be a little dangerous here.

A lot of you have heard me talk about
a lot of these things I'm going to share in
recent meetings of this body, and then also, at
other national and regional tribal workforce
development conferences.
But I'm just confirming that I do have control of the screen.

CHAIR WALDRON: Yes.

DR. RECORD: Okay, and we'll want to switch to slideshow then. Yes, there we go.

Is everyone seeing just the main slide, or the next slide as well?

MS. BROWN: The next slide also.

MEMBER WHITMAN: I see the two slides.

DR. RECORD: There we go. All right, let me see if I, let me try this.

I'll just ask somebody to -- I'll say next slide, please, if that works.

So, first I wanted to send regrets on behalf of my colleague, Julia Wakeford, from our government relations team. Julia joined the staff about a year and a half ago, and has since become our primary lead on policy, when it comes to workforce development. And I'm still a member of the team in terms of assisting her with policy matters, and also meeting on our programmatic workforce area.
Next slide, please. So, as many of you guys know, we've been working on this issue for many -- for decades now on various levels. Since I've been on board, we've really worked aggressively to look at what is really spurring success in tribal workforce development.

And really it boils down to as -- this is not news to any of you in this meeting, but the evidence fully shows, the research fully shows that it's really tribal self-determination, self-governance that is at the heart of success in tribal workforce development.

Those initiatives, those programs that really move the needle, that really led to lasting systemic change in the tribal community, in this arena, mall flow from tribes, tribal nations, tribal organizations taking the reins, taking the ownership, being allowed to do that. And then being resourced appropriately, first and foremost by the federal government to do cutting edge work. To take the risk necessary to innovate, to learn from their own mistakes, and
find more efficient and effective pathways forward, that really make a difference in the lives of individual tribal citizens and their families. And that's the lens through which we interpret this work and we advance this work.

Next slide, please. I always share this quote when I present on this issue, because to me this is ultimately what it's about. You know, all of you work in various capacities to further this mantra, if you will. We are rebuilding tribal nations by building people.

You know, tribal nation rebuilding really starts at the individual level. And empowering individuals and native people to achieve their fullest potential, by removing from their path roadblocks that stand in their way, and enabling them to cultivate their natural talents, skills and aspirations.

So, we take a very broad, at NCAI, we take a very broad comprehensive approach to this question of how can tribal nations rebuild their nations, by building tribal workforces that help
them achieve their long-term vision for vibrant tribal futures, to create an environment of empowerment for those generations yet to come.

Next slide, please. So, and this just gives you a little bit more nuance into what, how we envision this. So, it's, you know, when we think about workforce development, we don't approach it through a narrow lens. We approach it again, through a very comprehensive lens, and really thinking about it holistically.

And who needs to be at the table? Who needs to be involved with figuring out how do you build workgroups? How do you develop a workforce? And what does that look like? And for what greater purposes? And so, you know, for us it's about identifying and creating opportunities, and then preparing citizens to seize those opportunities that again, look not just at the client that a program might serve, but who's relying on that client? Who does that client rely on to lead a productive and satisfying life?
And then, if you take a step back, to the individual and, or his family, looking at citizens, communities and cultures and looking at how are tribes developing integrative approaches to those? And honestly, undertaking integrative approaches that quite honestly, the federal government has never been either equipped or inclined to pursue.

And that's why things like 1477 and 166 are so vitally important, because it provides that platform of flexibility, that platform of latitude for tribal nations and organizations to undertake those integrative approaches that aren't siloed by federal agency, that aren't siloed by an individual program, and really, you know, take forward the holistic solution to what has always been a holistic challenge.

Next slide, please. And we've done, NCAI has long done research in this area to kind of look at what are the key difference-making factors? And one of the key departments within NCAI as many of you know, is the Policy Research
Center.

And it's hard to believe this now, but it's almost a decade ago, they did a brief, a policy brief on jobs, that looked at jobs in higher education. And what's the relationship between the two in Indian Country? And what the research found was that self-governance, self-governed tribal investments in higher education workforce development had these sort of transformational benefits that extend far beyond individuals.

So, if you think about it in terms of, you know, financial parlance, return on investment, you know, calculated, sustained, meaningful investments in tribal workforce development on tribal terms will have these far-reaching benefits that go far beyond just workforce development. They'll have these transformational benefits that impact culture, that impact society, that impact community. That impact the ability of a tribal nation to exercise its sovereignty effectively.
I mean we see this across Indian Country, where more and more tribal nations are investing very, very, in very, very targeted fashion to develop workforces in either governance or development, or both. And the long-range benefits of that, those investments are extraordinary in the nation's ability to effectively diversify its economy, to create more job opportunity, be that home. To strengthen their governance capacity in order to take over more and more services that the federal government has long administered. And do them in a way that they feel makes sense for them, and may not necessarily be a cookie-cutter approach that the federal government has long employed.

And so, we see this more and more, and one of the wonderful parts of my job is to be able to track and document the extraordinary work that so many tribal nations are doing in this area.

Next slide, please. So, as Darrell mentioned, about three years ago now, we released
our Tribal Workforce Development Decision-Framing Toolkit, which you can find on our website.

And you'll see a web link for this here in a minute. But this really tried to capture, at a comprehensive level, the extraordinary efforts that tribal nations are undertaking, to distill out some best practices that we've seen from across tribal nations, and then show those back out to the tribes.

Next slide, please. And we focused in on 15 key strategic considerations. So, in all of the research that we did, looking at what different tribes are doing in this area, we honed in on 15 different areas, or strategic areas that tribes can -- that are effective and innovative in the space, that tribes tend to focus in on.

And for each of these, we posed questions to consider for tribal leaders and key decision makers. We offered a set of policy recommendations. So, these are what we see as effective strategies that tribal nations across the country, at the tribal level, have employed,
and that we are proffering these for other tribes
to consider employing. And then we also featured
a couple of leading examples of what different
tribes are doing in the space.

Next slide, please. And here's a list
of them, of the 15. And, you know, just as an
example, closing a loop. One of the
considerations that we focused on was, how are
tribes who are investing in their young people,
for example, in higher education to go off and
get degrees, how are they ensuring a return on
investment by figuring out how we bring those
folks back home?

How do we ensure that we are
leveraging the skills and education experience
that we are helping them to develop, on behalf of
the tribe? Or do we somewhere within the tribal
community, so they're enriching and improving the
quality of life in our tribal community?

Next slide, please. And then what
we've been doing since then, since we released
the toolkit, is we've launched a pilot project
working with two tribes in Meskwaki Nation in
Iowa, and the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa in
Minnesota to implement, develop and implement a
strategic plan for workforce development using
our toolkit as a guide. A guide for developing
strategy, and implementing strategy.

And they've been making some great
headway on this. Obviously, COVID has thrown a
wrench in the works of the efforts of not just
these two tribes, but a lot of tribes across the
country. But now that we're emerging slowly but
surely out of COVID, both tribes are moving
forward with, as an example, developing and
implementing 477 plans.

Meskwaki, for example, is embarking on
a career pathways initiative that is being
developed in close consultation with Gila River
Indian Community, which was, as many of you know,
the first tribe in the country to receive a
Department of Labor career pathways grant.

And so, it's really exciting to see
this work. And out of this engagement with these
two tribes, we're developing more of a formula for how tribes can take the toolkit and implement. We'll have more information coming out on that in the next year or so.

Next slide, please. And as many of you know, we did a set of four in-depth case studies on leading tribal approaches to workforce development. And those are available on our website at the URL below.

ncai.org/ptg/workforce-development.

Next slide, please. And as you guys know, so that was sort of more the programmatic side. Now, on the policy side, we've been very active and continue to be.

As many of you know, last year, right before COVID hit, we released Version 2.0 of our Comprehensive Brief on Workforce Development that features leading policy recommendations to both Congress and the Administration on how the federal government can empower tribal workforce development on tribal terms.

And you know, in this brief we make
essentially the same point that I've already
made, which is that, you know, tribal innovation,
tribes taking the rein and figuring out their own
priorities for workforce development, and then
advancing them, those priorities on their own
terms, is really what is at the heart of
workforce development success in Indian Country.

And it's the federal government's job,
not to dictate to tribes in workforce
development, but to consult with tribes and
figure out how best the federal government can
support, and not direct, but support tribal
workforce development.

Next slide, please. And obviously,
you know, a lot has happened since we released
this brief just about 15, 16 months ago, we've
had an election. We've had a change in
administration. We've seen the Biden executive
orders come out on both consultation, which
obviously has a direct bearing on this body, and
then also, the executive order on racial equity,
which as, for those of you familiar with that
specific executive order, a lot of it discussed
the shortcomings when it comes to data for
communities of color, which of course includes
Indian Country.

And so, you know, that I think, bears
witness to the fact that things like the American
Indian Population Labor Force Report is so
vitaly important to equipping tribal nations and
organizations with the information and data that
they need to make informed, strategic decisions
on how best to serve, you know, the native
populations when it comes to workforce
development.

And then also, what's the appropriate
level of support, both in terms of funding and
technical expertise that the federal government
needs to provide tribal nations and organizations
so that they can do workforce development as they
see fit, and to the extent that they need based
on the size and needs of their service
population.

So, here's just some key selected
recommendations from the brief. I know there's
an ongoing conversation between tribal nations
and organizations, this body, the Department of
Labor, other federal agencies on these, but I did
want to highlight some of them.

No surprise, we advocate for increased
annual appropriations for tribal workforce
development, and obviously WIOA Section 166, this
body being, you know, DINAP, NAETC, being part of
that formula, if you will.

You know, we've been harping for the
last few years now on why it's important that
WIOA 166 is not transferred into the State Adult
formula grant program. Obviously, we feel like
we're on more solid ground for keeping that
desire at bay. But, you know, we always to name
that and make sure that that never happens.

There are several recommendations in
the brief about how the federal government, both
on the Congressional side, and on the
administration side, can strengthen the NAETC.
And I'll talk in more detail about a couple of
those recommendations here in a minute.

More recently, we've been joining with
our partners across the country on why it's so
important that the Department of Labor does the
American Indian Labor Force Report right. That
they do it full consultation, full and ongoing
consultation, with tribal nations and tribal data
experts, and that they don't rush it.

It's better to do it right than to do
it quickly, is a point we've stated explicitly in
our correspondence with the Department of Labor
over the last year on the subject.

And then, we've been working very
closely with the 477 Tribal Workgroup and our
other partners on pushing the White House and the
Department of Interior, and all of the other 11
agencies that are mandated to follow the 477
expanded law, to immediately amend the inter-
agency MOA. And I'll talk more about that here
in a second.

Next slide, please. So, in terms of
funding, as many of you know, NCAI does an annual
Indian Country budget request. The latest one for FY22 was released earlier this year and it's called Restoring Promises. And that can be found on NCAI's website.

I did want to, I did want to highlight that, and that budget request which NCAI develops in close consultation with a variety of partners from across Indian Country, national, regional native organizations.

And we, you know, we consult on this particular, Department of Labor budget preparation asks, we consult with all the usual suspects in this space, including this body. And, you know, for the last several years we've been advocating for a minimum of 60.5 million for DINAP.

And as you may have noticed in the recent President Biden's budget request. He is asking for an increase from the FY2021 enacted number of 55.5 million, he's asking for 58 million, which is less than what we've asked for. So, we're going to be pushing hard on that number.
to try to get at least 60.5 million in the FY22 budget.

And, you know, if anyone is interested in connecting with us on that, feel free to reach out to me, and, or my colleague, Julia Wakeford, and we'll make sure that we've joined forces in all the ways that we need to, to continue to ensure that higher, for that higher number, which we think is important.

It's also important to note that, in this, in our NCAI's Indian Country budget request, we also requested $107 million for Youth Build. And the current FY enacted level is 96.53 million. In the Biden request, he actually requested 145 million, which is an increase of 50 percent. As you see here in this figure here.

So, the 96.53 last year, the Biden request is 145 million. So, obviously, we're quite happy with that number and we're going to be doing everything we can to keep that number intact, or at the very least, you know, make sure it doesn't get down below our ask of 107 million
for that program. Because we know what a
difference that makes in Indian Country.

Next slide, please. Here's just,
here's a snapshot, a screenshot of the policy
brief that we released last year, and some of the
things that we advocated for. You know, amending
NAETC's governing charter to ensure full Council
membership at all times.

As many of you know, during the
previous administration, that was a huge issue.
Where members were terming out, and then they
were not being immediately nominated and
replaced. And so, you had this sort of
inactivity take hold with the Council because
there just wasn't enough members currently
seated.

And so, we're going to continue to
push on that front to make sure that, you know,
every measure is taken to ensure that the Council
is at full capacity, and full speed on every step
of the way so that it can actually live up to its
charter.
And then there's some technical amendments we've been pushing for on the legislative front, to not punish tribal nations and organizations around accountability, performance standards, things like that. And then, just, you know, wanting to make sure that, you know, around things like formula funding, that tribes have the flexibility that they need.

Next slide, please. And then, you know, there's another, there's another recommendation here that, you know, we would invite further conversation on, about how does the Department of Labor continue to elevate the NAETC within the department. Make sure that, you know, when the Council speaks, that all the right people with the decision-making authority are listening, all the way up to the top, and that, you know, Indian Country figures prominently in how the department approaches its challenge of developing the American workforce, and that it, that Indian Country is an explicitly named part of that equation.
Next slide, please. And then circling back to the Labor Force report, as many of you know, this is an incredibly important issue, has long been. You know, the main reason why Congress transferred the authority, the decision, for developing this report from Interior to Labor is because Interior had failed in its duty to produce an accurate report, in accordance with the law, which is every two years.

And, you know, this, authority was transferred to Labor back in 2017, and here we are, you know, roughly four years later, and there is yet to be a Labor Force report produced by Labor. And while that's, that's unfortunate, it doesn't mean that Labor ought to rush it and get it wrong. And really, it is incumbent upon Labor to get it right.

We've shared in correspondence along with our partners last July, and then again on the response to the request for information that the Labor put out, essentially the same messages. That, you know, Labor has to be sure
that's it's mining the right data, that it's
allowing for tribal data to be part of the
equation, and that this report is developed in a
full ongoing consultation with Indian Country,
all the way through. We've enumerated several
ways that it can do that, and I'd be happy to
share this correspondence with anyone who is
interested.

Next slide, please. And lastly, I
just want to wrap up, before we open it up for
any Q&A or discussion in the time I have
remaining, the 477 Inter-Agency MOA. This thing
has been a poison pill since day one when it was
essentially implemented back in December 2018.

And we knew going in that it was not
going to work effectively, and our worst fears
have been confirmed. You know, this is a, this
is probably the most telling quote I've heard.

And it actually came from a Department
of Labor representative at a meeting between the
477 Tribal Workgroup and the federal agencies,
back in September 2019. When the DOL
representative at the meeting said, you know, and
this is not even a year after the MOA had been
implemented, that, you know, we wanted to follow
the law, but the MOA prevented us from doing so.

So, that tells you right there that
the MOA is unlawful. And we've been singing the
same song to Interior and those agencies for the
last almost three years now. And we'll continue
to do so.

We submitted comments for their RFI --
or I'm sorry, their latest round of consultation,
which was actually, Interior's latest round of
consultations, which was actually terminated
eyearly, which we hope is a positive sign, in that,
ye've seen, or they've heard all they need to
hear about where Indian Country stands on the
MOA, and that they're now committed to fixing it.

And so, we're continuing to apply all
pressure on DOI and the other federal agencies to
come to the table with Indian Country and fix
this MOA, which is essentially designed to codify
in place the very bad behavior that the 2017 law
was meant to uproot and eradicate.

Next slide, please. And, you know, we're calling in this, in this call to action, you know, five essential fixes. I don't really need to go into these, but, you know, the biggest issue is that the way the MOA works, it provides the ability for other agencies to essentially exercise veto authority over programs that are covered under the law, that tribes should be allowed to include in their 477 plan.

But if an agency happens not to like that they're -- one of the programs over which they hold purview is included in the 477 tribal plan, they can essentially exercise veto authority. And DOI, at least to date, has not challenged them on that veto authority. And so, it's essentially rendered the 2017 law completely ineffective until this MOA can be fixed.

Next slide, please. So, there's a link to the Tribal Governance and Special Projects part of the website. And there's my email address if anyone wants to fault with me on
any of the issues or activities that I've covered. And I'm available now for questions or discussion.

MS. ECHOHAWK: Folks are all muted.

CHAIR WALDRON: Do we have a question? Any questions?

MS. BROWN: Joe Quintana has his hand raised.

CHAIR WALDRON: Chair recognizes Joe Quintana, please state your region.

MEMBER QUINTANA: Good morning, everyone. Joseph Quintana, Region 6. Thank you, Ian, for joining us today. I'm glad to see that you're doing well, especially as we're coming out of the pandemic.

A couple of questions and then I'll wait for your answer.

First, I know you mentioned quite a bit about the tribal nation community, but looking at the urban Indian population as a whole, the state which I reside in now, 90 percent of the current American Indian population
now reside in urban Indian centers.

And so, at the start of the pandemic, we were very much wondering what type of challenges the American Indian communities were facing, and particularly looking at unemployment rates?

Here in Southern California, at the height of the pandemic, the unemployment rate was around 13 to 15 percent for the general public. So, we were estimating that the American Indian population was looking at 17 percent higher, but we couldn't find definite answers.

And we did reach out to a number of people across the nation, including local academic, UCLA, University of Arizona, Stephen Cornell whom you know, in trying to address the issue. And a lot of the response that we received is people aren't looking at the urban Indian population.

I'm wondering how we can best address it going forward? Is there additional data that's been received now that we're one year in,
and any recommendations going forward?

   And then, a second question that I
also have is in regard to the workforce in
general. We know a number of tribes across the
nation, in particular the Navajo nation, were
impacted significantly by the COVID-19 crisis.

   Are we looking at a workforce that is
prepared for -- we got them to be prepared for a
normal, in regards to working from home. But now
we're asking them to get ready and go back to
work. And are they going to be ready for an even
more competitive job market?

   So, those are just the two initial
questions I have. Thank you, again.

   DR. RECORD: Yeah, thank you, Joe.

   So, on the data question, I know it's
an issue. I definitely want to connect you with
our Policy Research Center, which is our,
especially our data shop. We've had some
conversations about how do we capture and where
do we look to capture, from existing sources, or
active sources, worker relocation?
So, you know, as you know there's been a lot of coming and going from urban centers to reservation communities since COVID started, for a variety of reasons. And then the fact that, you know, you have a large number, growing number of major employers who are embracing telework as a long-term solution.

I think it really makes it incumbent on tribal leaders to think proactively about the challenges that presents, but also the opportunities that presents to bring more of our people back home to where they can work remotely on reservation, in community, and maybe working for an employer that's located in an urban area.

I think the other thing that we need to get on top of when it comes to data, is what are the worker reskilling needs for tribal workers?

So, and obviously, you know, tribal governance has a major role to play in that, in terms of figuring out, you know, locally on our reservation, reservation and neighboring economy,
what does the changing dynamics look like in terms of the market and what kind of workforce we're going to need as a tribe, and what kind of workforce opportunities are going to be available around us, given how COVID has transformed the employment landscape in many areas?

But also, just in terms of some of the industries that have increased expediently since COVID, and some of those that just are not going to come back like they did before COVID.

And then also, like as you think about things like infrastructure, and with what is likely to be a major infrastructure package coming through Congress in the next, you know, hopefully sooner rather than later, but, you know, hopefully with full consideration of Indian Country's needs and priorities in it.

What will that look like in terms of investments that will be available to tribal nations, tribal organizations, that they can then deploy strategically?

And obviously strategically is going
to mean, you know, with all of the best available
data to make informed strategic decisions about
how best to leverage those resources around
things like green energy jobs, infrastructure
jobs, things like that.

And then if you can actually, I don't
know if I touched on both of your questions
there, but I wanted to make sure I actually
touched on your second one.

MEMBER QUINTANA: Second one was, well
no, I appreciate it. You did touch on it a
little bit. The second was in regard to tribes
who have been impacted significantly by COVID-19.
And we got them to adapt during their digital
crisis, and then what we can do to assist them as
they, we now ask them to go back to work?

We talked about reskilling, we talked
about preparing them for new, different job, type
of job market. So, I think those all answered my
questions.

DR. RECORD: Yeah, and the one other
thing I'll say is, you know, we're doing more and
more work around getting tribal leaders and key
decision makers trained in on the relationship
between economic development and workforce
development, and the need to integrate those at a
foundational level, and then out to the
programmatic level.

And so, you know, and really, we've
done a lot and will be doing a lot. We're
actually releasing later this year a toolkit on
economic development. How can tribes build
thriving, resilient tribal economies?

And, you know, particularly in the
wake of COVID, in really looking at COVID not
just as a crisis, but as an opportunity to take a
big step back. And take a hard look at how
tribes have done economy in recent years. And
how they need to perhaps think about it
differently and more holistically.

And workforce development being part
of that holistic vision around economic
development, to think beyond just, okay let's
just diversify our economy beyond, you know,
gaming and retail. Because, you know, we've seen how fragile those things are with COVID. And, you know, maybe increase competition in the market place and things like that.

But how do we look longer term, and actually create a fertile ground for economy, any kind of economic activity to take root and grow? And what does that look like for the type of workforce that we need to create and get out ahead of that curve, to where we can start developing a workforce now that will be ready to plug and play, you know, five to ten years from now?

And that's, you know, for example like what, you know, a community like Gila River is doing with their career pathways initiative. And so many other tribes are trying to do that long-range workforce development, projecting and then developing towards that projection.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you very much. Are there any other questions?

MEMBER SEVEN: Yes, this is Kay. So,
hey, it's good morning in Idaho.

(Native language spoken.)

MEMBER SEVEN: So, I wanted to share something that I've been a part of in Idaho. Idaho, with the Idaho Workforce Development Council and the Idaho Association of cities and counties, went into -- in agreement with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and their curriculum called Talent Pipeline Management -- and Idaho selected 30 Idahoans to go through a six-month academy in 2020. I was selected to be one of those 30 members and it's been an exciting curriculum.

And the tools and resources available through the Chamber of Commerce are exactly the tools that I think Joe was asking about in terms of a portal for industry to gather data to make informed decisions on their workforce development plans in the next year, or three to five years.

And also includes, you know, asking the question, well which institution provides the educational programming or training programs that will prepare our workforce for us?
So, it's been real exciting here in Idaho. Not only doing this Talent Pipeline Management, but working with our Stem Ecosystem network. And building better connections with the institutions and a lot of partners on building pipelines in Idaho in energy, manufacturing, healthcare, hospitality, cybersecurity, and there was even a category for travel industry.

So, I'm real excited about what we're ready to do here. Thank you.

DR. RECORD: Yeah, thank you, Kay. I'll just, one reaction to that. We've been doing a growing amount of work with food sovereignty. We have a new food sovereignty advancement initiative. And a lot of that focuses on our workforce development.

You know, because there's a -- I think even before COVID there was a growing number of tribes that were trying to tackle comprehensively, How do we reclaim control over our food systems and not be so vulnerable and
dependent on, you know, the outside food supply chain, and all that thing?

And certainly, COVID has exacerbated the long-standing food insecurity issues in so many tribal communities. And so, you're seeing out of the, out of both the CARES Act and now the American Rescue Plan funding, a growing number of tribes taking a significant portion of the money that they're receiving and plowing it into things like developing their capacity as a tribal government.

To launch food sovereignty-based enterprises which of course will require all kinds of expertise. You know, everything from, you know, tilling the soil to, you know, managing the finances on the other end. And then also, at the individual entrepreneurial level, the individual native farmers, and ranchers.

And so, that's an area where you're seeing a lot of innovation, where in order to get a better handle on the data, tribes are partnering with, you know, four-year universities
that have applied research institutions that
either have, or are willing to partner with
tribal nations and or urban Indian organizations
to help them get a handle on just what are the
labor workforce, you know, data dynamics right
now?

    What is, you know, where are workers
moving? What kind of workers are seeing their
skills become antiquated, based upon, you know,
shifting market place, things like that?

    So, and in fact, in the food
sovereignty space, we're going to be releasing in
the next year, a -- what did we call it -- a
partnerships guide that shows in each region
where tribal governments and tribal organizations
can go to partner with things like four-year
colleges, small business incubator centers,
things like that to help get a handle on the
data. Help connect science with support
services, technical assistance, training, all
that kind of stuff.

    MS. BROWN: Joe Quintana has his hand
MEMBER QUINTANA: So, hello, again.

Me in Region 6. Didn't quite have my hand up. I did have a big thumbs up in regards to everything you were just mentioning. But it did however, pique my interest in regards to think-tanks.

I know you primarily represent the sovereign nations across the country, but how can we better, be better working with think-tanks as far as looking at long-term communal change?

Especially I'm thinking about things that are impacting our people, not just now during the COVID crisis, not only did we just come out of a pandemic, we also came out of real turmoil in regards to recognizing racial injustice, working towards equity, an equitable lens. And then also, of course we also are coming through a time when we just had a major Supreme Court decision with the McGirt case.

So, this is a real interesting time, especially for native people. And I'm thinking how could we insert our perspective as far as
looking at long-term communal change? Not just within our own spheres or silos, but looking at doing it at a much grander scale. I don't know if you have any recommendations there?

DR. RECORD: Yeah, I mean, I think the landscape is, we're at an opportune moment, let me put it that way, given the convergence of forces. I think particularly the philanthropic world has its focus more squarely on Indian Country that perhaps it ever has.

We work very closely as an organization with, in the racial equity space with a lot of the other major national racial equity and civil rights organizations. We're actively involved in The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

But, and we work in an even deeper more granular level through what's called the Kellogg Foundation Racial Equity Anchors collaborative, with organizations like NAACP, National Urban League, UnidosUS, and about five other organizations to really advance common
priorities that, you know, where we see these systems and policies that are rooted in racial and economics inequity that are directed at all people of color, no matter, you know, if they're native or Hispanic, or African American.

It doesn't really matter, you know, obviously the way they manifest in those various communities may be slightly different, but they're all rooted in the same systemic policies, and really shining a bright spotlight on that. And then advancing policy solutions that we all agree would lift all boats, so to speak.

And so, that's been really instrumental in uplifting and gaining, and generating great visibility for how a lot of these polices really impact native communities, both in the reservation areas, and then urban areas. You know, so, things like, you know, police violence against native people.

We've been able to really raise the visibility of the disproportion impacts, particularly in urban areas, of police violence
against native people. Whereas, you know, it
might be hard for national media to take, to pay
attention to that, you know, four or five years
ago. Now it's, you know, we're part of that
class conversation every step of the way. So, it's
been really helpful.

CHAIR WALDRON: I am sorry, I'm having
some technical difficulties and just was
disconnected for a minute. And just please
standby if I get disconnected again and I'm gone.

Are there any other questions? There
being --

MEMBER HIBBELER: Darrell, this is
Pat.

CHAIR WALDRON: -- none, thank you
very much.

Hi, Patty.

MEMBER HIBBELER: Hi, sorry. Hello,
Ian, how are you? Patty Hibbeler, from Region 6.

CHAIR WALDRON: The Chair recognizes
Ms. Hibbeler.

MEMBER HIBBELER: Thank you, Darrell.
I just have a quick question, building on Joseph's last question, maybe a little more simpler one. How can this Council interact and, with NCAI closer? We hear from you when we have our meetings twice a year, but we really want to be able to create that native think-tank as Joseph put it, moving forward.

And make sure that we're having those conversations as you're beginning to lead your policy people forward in workforce development?

DR. RECORD: Yeah, we're all for it. I mean, you know, we're going through a bit of a transition as you know. We brought on the new CEO, Dante Desiderio, a few weeks ago. And many of you know, he came over to NCAI from NAFOA.

And so, we've been, you know, we've been briefing him on everything we've been doing. And starting to chart out, you know, a strategic path forward on a lot of these key issues, including workforce development.

And, you know, we're dealing with a little bit of a transition on our government
relations team, because, you know, with the new administration coming in, they see all the great work our staff's been doing.

And so, we have, you know, our top two policy people recently left to take, you know, really important positions with Commerce and Treasury to help distribute all this funding that's coming through the American Rescue Plan, which is a great thing.

But I do agree with you that a more regular, you know, process where we can regularly interact and begin to think and flesh out the, that broad outline of what this, you know, institute might look like. And how we can really get at the things like the dearth of data in urban Indian communities? And making sure that they're a part of the, more fully part of the equation.

And then also, figuring out, you know, how do we, how do we help the urban Indian organizations better connect with tribal governments to make sure that there's this
comprehensive picture about where all tribal citizens are, how are they working, what kind of skill development do they need, all that kind of stuff.

MEMBER HIBBELEGER: Absolutely, Ian. I wholeheartedly agree. And I also think that there's all these different structures and systems around workforce development, that we lead forward in making sure that we know, you know, what the right hand is doing with the left hand so we're in a coordinated effort.

I think the more we do that across systems, the greater effectiveness that we will have. So, I'm really interested in working with you, and whoever that might be at NCAI to try to develop that for the Council. Thank you.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you very much, Pat. So, we are on the hour, I don't know if our, is our next presenter available? Suzi?

MS. LEVINE: Hello. This is Suzi LeVine. How are you?

CHAIR WALDRON: Fine, Suzi. Let me do
your introduction. I wasn't sure if you were
gone. I've been having some technical
difficulties with my screen.

So, Suzi LeVine, as you can all see --
I love the colors in the back, the blue and white
-- is the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary --

MS. LEVINE: Okay, I'm going to make
sure you can see also that, my little Washington

State thing there.

CHAIR WALDRON: Yes, I do see it over
there, yes -- she's in Training Administration,
she's the Deputy Assistant Secretary of
Employment & Training Administration. Suzi is
from the State of Washington, as you see her

emblem in the back. State government as a

commissioner for the Employment Security
Department. Served as the Ambassador to
Switzerland -- that must have been fascinating --

and to Lichtenstein, close enough.

We are happy to be meeting you today,

and look forward to having dialog. So, welcome

aboard, thank you very much for spending the time
with us in the meeting today. You are on.

MS. LEVINE: Fantastic, well thank you so much. It is such an honor to be on. And I appreciate the introduction. This is -- in my previous job the National Guard got involved as we were working on Unemployment Insurance, and they called themselves Joint Task Force COHO.

So, they had a tribal member of the community who created that logo for them. And so, the back is signed by all the members of the National Guard who helped people attain access to benefits through some work that we had them do.

So, and also, you mentioned briefly my time in Switzerland. I worked in close partnership with Ambassador Keith Harper. Who, I don't know how many of you may know Keith? But he was the United States' last representative to the Human Rights Council and brought his experience in Native American affairs very much to that. And brought of a lot of amazing culture to Switzerland. So, just a point of note there in terms of my time in Switzerland.
But, I'm especially excited to talk to you all because at the state level, frankly, I felt like there wasn't enough happening at the state level with regard to employment, because there's this sort of separate consideration within WIOA for the tribes versus the general population.

And I saw a lot of local workforce development boards doing some great work on this front, up in Omak, out on the peninsula, with, and in partnership with the tribes. But I still feel like there's so much more to do. And that the state workforce agencies themselves, don't have enough engagement. And what I saw was at the federal level, there was.

And so, when I had the opportunity to come into this position as Principal Deputy and the Acting Assistant Secretary, I was very excited especially about this area. And I want to thank you, Chairman, for inviting me today to speak. And thank you so much to the team, to Athena, and to Kim for the work that they do in
I understand from the folks on my team, that you all as members of Native American Employment and Training Council, really have a broad mix of experience and expertise. And I recognize that the only approach to success is to allow the native communities to decide what works best for them.

And so, today, I really hope to get to know you and hear about your ideas, and your interest, and your challenges. And I understand that some of that has already begun in the conversations today. And I'm very excited about working together towards that.

We know that many tribes have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. And I understand that many tribal communities were really completely shut down, like others across the nation. I certainly saw it here in Washington State. And many of your reservation-based communities also faced higher risk complications and are now facing challenges in
rebuilding your tribal economies.

Although I do want to especially laud the tribal communities who have embraced and really moved forward very quickly towards vaccinations. I definitely want to hear from you on how we can help you rebuild your communities, and get people back to work.

This is a tectonic moment in our history, and in our economic structures, and in our social fabric. I mean I want an opportunity to rethink what works and what doesn't work in native communities. Some businesses may not recover. Some have changed forever. Some may come back stronger and better than before.

And I really am looking forward to hearing from you on how the tribal economies have been impacted, and your thoughts on how we can help businesses in native communities, and help the communities themselves.

I just for example, got off a call in speaking with the Bureau of Prisons, about how we can do more to fight recidivism. And how we can
do more during both that time when people are in
sort of work release time, as well as in that
re-entry timeframe.

And I mentioned to them some of the
work I've seen here on the ground, in Washington,
around this, and the disproportionate impact on
tribal communities. And they lit up, like a
lightbulb. They were so excited.

So, there may be some areas there that
we can also work on in terms of re-entry
specifically targeted to the tribal communities.
I would also like to build on Secretary Walsh's
recent testimony on health education and labor.

And specifically, his remarks about
the President's commitment to ensure that women,
people of color, individuals impacted by the
justice system, people in recovery from mental
health, and their substance use -- substance use
disorders, and people with disabilities among
other under-represented communities, can access
and attain good paying, high quality jobs to
build back better.
This is a core goal underlying WIOA. And every dollar invested in workforce makes a marked difference in the gains and returns to a community.

While many Americans are doing well, I'm keenly aware, and we are all keenly aware, that American Indians and Alaska Natives still lag behind in many areas, such as education, employment and health. And I know that Native Americans have lower academic attainments in comparison to the overall U.S. population.

And so, I'm especially excited about the apprenticeship conversation that's going to be happening here, because I feel like our utilization of academic attainment and matriculation to college is a false narrative. And that there are many paths to success, and we need to light more of them up.

But I will point out the U.S. census states that only 15 percent of American Indians and Alaska Natives aged 25 and older have a bachelor's degree, compared to 32.1 percent for
the U.S. population. I would like to see this statistic changed, and improved.

And I think all of our combined efforts can make an impact in native communities and our nation. And I want to make sure that we introduce metrics that don't just rely on a bachelor's degree, but that talk about post-secondary education and credentials.

I heard that mentioned before. And an emphasis not just on college being the path to success, but on employment and training being the path to success.

I look forward to the articles that aren't just like, so and so is the first in their family to go to college. How about, so and so is the first in the family to get, to pay their mortgage, right?

Or, so and so is their first in the family to get a sustainable family wage job. Those to me are the metrics of success, not a specific degree.

To improve these statistics requires
a really concentrated effort, enhanced education, employment opportunities, and to create pathways to jobs and careers with advancement opportunities. And to help Indians and Native Americans enter and remain in the middle class.

And I'll just share back my experience in Switzerland, why I'm so bullish on apprenticeship.

So, Switzerland has among the top three GDP per capita in the world. And you think of the Swiss as a very homogeneous group, they're not. But people have sort of a thought about the Swiss, right?

Seventy percent, 70 percent of Swiss young people do apprenticeship, not high school. It, college isn't a requirement for success. You go in a room with CEOs, and 50 percent of them served as apprentices to start their careers. So, we know that there are many paths.

So, while making college more affordable and accessible to all students is a priority for this administration. So is making
apprenticeship accessible and more viable, and
increasing apprenticeship by one to 2 million
slots.

The President's fiscal year '22 budget proposes significant investments in community
colleges, including tribal colleges, and in
apprenticeship, with an addition $100 million
being put forward towards apprenticeship.

As you may know the budget calls for
$58 million more for Native American programs,
which is an increase of two and a half million
over the current year. And support the continued
 provision of employment and training grants
directly to Indian and Native American
communities.

We want to make sure that the
opportunities that we provide through any
training leads to good quality jobs.

In 2008, when we recovered from the
recession, frankly, it was a false recovery. You
had inequitable recovery. You had many people
going into jobs that were not sustainable family
wage jobs. They weren't good quality jobs. And with this economic devastation of the pandemic, those were the first to be impacted.

As we're recovering from this pandemic, we should be focusing our workforce training efforts, including in the Native American community on good quality jobs. And that are especially, that are sustainable family wage jobs.

Welcome to a Zoom moment, that's my daughter, Thalia.

Thank you, for tolerating that moment.

Anyway, yes, I talked about registered apprenticeship being really one of those quality training opportunities. And I'm so pleased to see that tomorrow again, we're going to be having the opportunity to meet with our Office of Apprenticeship.

And I know that some of you may have been to that program, but I really encourage you to share the information on the benefits around apprenticeship and how it can afford really
expansive opportunity to all the communities.

So, I have a lot more to share, but I really want to hear from you. I'm somebody who likes to listen first. And I've been talking too much.

So, I'll finish just by saying, we fully support the concept for tribes to continue and build on the integration of employment and training related services into a single, comprehensive plan. And consolidating those services to streamline and provide more effective services to communities.

So, I'm going to pause there. And thank you again for inviting me to this conversation. I welcome your input on how we can make our grantmaking process more inclusive and equitable, or any other suggestions you may have about our programs, services, or efforts. I am at your service.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you very much.

The floor is now open for questions from our Advisory Council. It looks like Kim -- the chair
recognizes Kim Carroll.

MEMBER CARROLL: Thank you, Chairman.
Kim Carroll, Other Disciplines. My -- actually,
I have comments about the grant-making process
through the Department of Labor. We have been
very fortunate to have been awarded several
Department of Labor employment training grants.

However, we're finding that we're
having difficulties with some of the requirements
that are being placed upon us that really are
more geared towards states and don't take into
account on our tribal limitations as well as
those objectives. I guess my question is can
something be done about that?

For example, reporting forms for some
of the programs includes operators and
administrators. You have to separate those.
Well, we're both. We're not going to subcontract
with someone else. That's just burdensome.

MS. LEVINE: That's great feedback.
That's very, very actionable and very useful
feedback. We actually are doing -- I have
assigned one of our senior staff in our agency a special project to specifically look at how do we make our grants more equitable including making sure that they are accessible and available to a more diverse populations of grantees. That kind of feedback is very, very useful.

I would ask Athena and Kim to work with Debra Carr to capture some of this feedback as we look ahead at our subsequent grants, especially as we are building out our plans for this next program year. Kim, thank you very much for that very actionable and direct feedback.

MEMBER CARROLL: Thank you. Thank you. I'll send you more.

MS. LEVINE: Please. Please do. Please do.

CHAIR WALDRON: So do we have any other questions?

MS. LEVINE: I'll put myself on mute.

CHAIR WALDRON: Erwin.

MEMBER PAHMAHMI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Erwin Pahmahmie, Region IV.
Thank you for being with us today, Suzi. I appreciate the information you provided us. In 2018 we had a representative come and visit me and my colleagues at the tribe in Oklahoma and there was a Department of Labor representative that was -- her focus was apprenticeships and linking tribes with job training institutes and also working on developing the curriculum as well as the accreditations and stuff to be recognized.

The deal was this representative not only overseen Oklahoma, they also had Arkansas and Texas. I know that they are going to be, like you said, funneling more money into these projects and stuff, but we also need more technical assistance to get these up and going.

We would also like to extend the invite to have one of these representatives to be present at our national conference to help us in those areas of developing these apprenticeships. We're very excited that they go into so many different aspects such as hospitality, customer
service.

Even the newer innovative green jobs that we're going to try to anticipate for. Those things -- there needs to be more people than just one person that's over three states. She was, I want to say, so busy that, yeah, she sent us some information but that's all I ever heard from her.

After that I never heard back from her. I don't know if she's still here or not. I mean, we've all kind of moved forward with other things. Yeah, I'm very excited about the apprenticeship concept -- not concept but proven method, you know, on helping our people be more successful because, yeah, some people have those achievements under their belt. They tend to work more and work harder in their areas of expertise. That's all I have for right now. Thank you, Suzi, for being with us today.

MS. LEVINE: Thank you so much for that. Why don't you go back and find out who that was. It would be great if you have a name. Unfortunately, even as funding has expanded over
the past few years for grants, there hasn't been comparable funding expansion for the administration of those grants. The Fiscal Year '22 budget does afford that expansion and we are very hopeful that it will pass and we are planning for that expansion of staff and support.

    In the meantime, though, we are putting out grants that will be announced in the next two weeks to both the state apprentice agencies, but also creating centers of excellent for technical assistance, one of which is specifically dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

    What we can do is -- we haven't announced who the recipients are of those grants yet. We've gotten wonderful applications for those. But what we can do is also make sure to connect that up as well to the technical assistance and support for your efforts.

    I will pre-commit that the Office of Apprenticeship will be happy to engage and be involved in your national conference and
supporting you that way. I would ask again Athena and Kim to sort of capture that and then we can follow up with John Ladd and his team on the resources to be dedicated to that.

To your point with regards to hospitality, that is music to my ears because I think people have traditionally thought of apprenticeship and the trades have done an amazing job of carrying the torch of apprenticeship over the past decade in the areas related to construction and electricians and plumbers and builders which is amazing, amazing careers.

We are now seeing since 2015 really an apprenticeship renaissance that is expanding to new and diverse areas including green jobs, including the hospitality sector, the technology sectors, cyber security, healthcare. You name it, it is now expanding and, again, recognizing that this earn and learn model really is the best.

Employers being not just consumers but
co-producers of talent is a fantastic model.

That's amazing, Erwin, and I'm excited about what we can do to partner with you and accelerate and amplify your work.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you. We have also questions from Joe Quintana. The Chair recognizes Joe.

MR. QUINTANA: Good day, Suzi. This is Joseph Quintana, Region 6. I appreciate you joining us today and hope you and your family are all well as we've come through the pandemic. Also appreciate that you have a couple of Yodas sitting over your shoulder behind you on the other side. Thank you for that.

I just want to kind of uplift and talk a little bit more about what Kim had mentioned in regards to giving is looking at intentional giving. I know we're talking about the discussion of an apprenticeship program, but people in my area are in continuous cycles of poverty.

Ninety percent of the members here in
my area are living below the federal poverty line. Where you were talking about educational achievement gaps, 80 percent of our members received a high school diploma, GED, or they don't graduate at all. Only 12 to 14 percent actually go on into higher education.

There's considerable issues that we know that we face. In the last 42 years this program has been continuously underfunded. It's seen 75 percent decreases in the last 42 years. There needs to be major investments taking place, not only across Indian county, but also in the body of the service that's serving them.

I know we are also having major issues in regard to gender equality. American Indian women here receive 55 cents for every dollar that a non-Hispanic white male makes. That's a tremendous gap, especially when the bread winner, the one who takes care of the family and has to also go out and find a job, a majority of the time it's young women.

There also continues to be barriers to
upward mobility. You mentioned having access to
the middle class market. Really that's only a
dream for many native people. They don't know
how that dream can get realized, especially
without any further assistance or development.

We got them to adapt to the changes of
the pandemic. We've also asked them to adapt to
working from home. As you can see for yourself,
you're facing many of the challenges that we all
face, interruptions in the things that we see.
Soon we're going to be asked to go back into the
work space and back to the office.

Many of the people who were on
unemployment insurance, those unemployment
insurance benefits are going to be removed. How
do we prepare that group for a more competitive
job market? How do we also prepare them for the
scale needed for them to be successful?

How also do we overcome the social
determinants of health? We know that our
membership continues to see low levels of quality
of health impacting the majority by job security,
housing security, and things like that.

So just wondering about your recommendations as we look forward. Most importantly, the investment of our youth don't see themselves as the judge or as the CEO, as the director of an organization because they've never realized that. They don't have anybody whom they can look towards often times to see that. How can we, not just to apprenticeship, but also career exploration as well?

I don't know about any of you but it took me about four or five different things before I figured out what I really was good at. I think often times our young people are facing the same challenges as well so just wanted to get your opinion on those.

MS. LEVINE: I have many opinions. The good news is I've got the president, you know, and the wind of the president at my back. The American Jobs Plan is proposing $100 billion in investment in the workforce. That includes more comprehensive services. As you're saying,
it's not enough for us to just simply say let's work on your resume.

We also need to work on your childcare. We also need to work on your health. We also need housing security. There's mental health. There is helping individuals deal with substance abuse and addiction. There's so many aspects to helping an individual to get escape velocity from poverty.

I've seen it in terms of some of these test runs around poverty reduction work groups where how do you get people from below the federal poverty line beyond and help them get that escape. It isn't just by saying let's sit down and work on your resume.

Are you using LinkedIn? Do they even have digital access? Do they even have broadband to their community? Do they even have a roof over their heads? Is their address a local shelter? Do they have food? Do they have clean water? What are the different aspects? We have to think about it in a more comprehensive way in
dealing with the whole person and dealing with, frankly, their whole community.

The proposal within the American Jobs Plan really encompassed that and will be pretty much the most impactful investment ever made in poverty reduction that our country has ever done. So we really are full force in pushing for those happenings. Within that, to your point on jobs and on gender equality, the key lens to, frankly, the whole American Jobs Plan, is equity.

Like I said, I've been so impressed that we learned the lessons of the 2008/2009 recovery where equity was not at the center where you had people on Wall Street recovering beautifully, and people on Main Street really getting kicked in the keister. What we need now is an equitable recovery and recognition of what does that mean.

Equity doesn't mean you give everybody the same thing equally. Equity means you recognize who people are, what their conditions are, and how you help them individually be able
1 to see over the fence. I don't know if you've
2 ever seen that beautiful image that shows you
3 give everybody the same box it doesn't help
4 everybody. You give them the right-size box that
5 they can see over the fence.
6
7 I have confidence that together,
8 because we can't do this alone, together we're
9 going to be able to succeed in this front and
10 help individuals. Your point is so salient. It
11 is so easy for people to be like well, of course,
12 you want to just expand the middle class. For
13 some people that is still unattainable.
14
15 So how do we help people have that
16 vision? I'll use an example, again, for my time
17 in Switzerland where they do something called
18 schnupfen which in German means sniffing. In 7th
19 grade they start career fairs, 7th grade career
20 fairs. Eight grade schnupfen where you spend a
21 week at a company trying it out. Ninth grade you
22 apply and 10th grade you start in your
23 apprenticeship.
24
25 Building out career exploration is a
matter of corporate social responsibility. This needs to be employers. This needs to be everybody from warehousers to IBM to Google to Deere. All of these guys realizing that, oh, hey, if we want to build up our work force in the future, we have to start investing in middle school.

How do we help them have a taste of that experience? You are absolutely right. $10 billion of that money, of that $100 billion, is dedicated to pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship. How do you help build out those types of experiences and includes also an investment in youth apprenticeship. Thank you. I'm in full agreement. That was a long way of saying yes.

CHAIR WALDRON: I'll try to speak up. I understand I'm not getting good connection. We have time for just one more question to say on the agenda.

Candace. The Chair recognizes Candace.
MS. LOWRY: Good afternoon. Candace Lowry, Region 3. Suzi already answered part of my question. Earlier you talked about Indians and education for the American Indians in high school and middle school. Within those efforts what type of information will be sent out and now can we assure that American Indian youth will get that information in order for it to be successful.

In the past efforts, the Indian education within the states I represent a lot of the children do not get the information. The information doesn't trickle down. How can we -- are there any measures to ensure that the information within these programs will get to the appropriate areas?

Earlier you talked about the broadband. There is a big push to get broadband in these rural areas but a lot of them still do not have it so they won't get that information.

Within the schools and with the cutbacks the Indian education employees, the staff, who were
to give out the information, they have also been
laid off and lost their jobs. How can we get
that information and ensure that it is pushed out
to the individuals and the non-tribal community
that will ask the tribal community.

MS. LEVINE: Well, thank you so much,
Candace, for that question. Let me just clarify,
are you talking about youth apprenticeship or are
you talking about education opportunities in
general?

MS. LOWRY: The youth apprenticeship
program.

MS. LEVINE: Perfect. Perfect. Well,
let's do this. Let me ask Athena.

Athena, are there already connections
happening between our Office of Apprenticeship
and our regional partners? For example, in South
Carolina there is an amazing group working on
youth apprenticeship and really making incredible
headway. Are they already tapped into and
connected up with the tribal communities there?
Do you know?
MS. BROWN: I don't know and I don't believe so but I think that's a question that can be asked in our dialogue with the Apprenticeship Office. They are going to have an opportunity to ask and then also listen to the public.

MS. LEVINE: Also, Candace, just to give you another hook into our agency, our senior advisor for workforce development is a person named Brent Parton. Oh, there he is. Brent Parton.

Brent was recently -- he can't talk about it but I can -- most recently was at an organization called Numerica and they had a program advancing youth apprenticeship and really has been an accelerant to the growth and efforts around youth apprenticeship across the United States.

He brings that wealth of experience to ETA and can help in terms of how we better connect the dots between the Native American communities, and that would be amazing to do more with our regions.
Brent, do you want to speak to that?

MR. PARTON: Sure, and I'll be brief and say please reach out. I think there's a number of opportunities. There's really a growing field of effort around the youth apprenticeship space I'd be happy to plug you into.

I'll mention a little bit about both North and South Carolina. They both have robust programs in place. It would not be challenging to see where those connections are being made with tribal communities. I know just recently some of the more recent grantees in Arizona and New Mexico there is a profound interest in working with tribal communities as well. Those are private grantees. They are philanthropically funded grantees but there could be some connections there.

I will say that this is something that when you think of these apprenticeship programs this is a newer space, a newer field. We've been trying to reverse engineer equity into
apprenticeships, particularly when it comes to
tribal communities for some time.

Here we have an opportunity to build
from the ground up and do it right. That can be
at the center in making sure these programs are
reaching the communities that need the most, and
our tribal communities are certainly are in that
category.

With that in mind, I will make sure
you all have my contact information. I would be
more than happy to follow up with you on this.

MS. LEVINE: To further echo what
Brent is saying, Amy Firestone, who is the vice
president there in South Carolina, I guarantee
she would be so fired up for conversation with
you, Candace, and would bend over backwards to do
any and everything possible to connect up her
efforts with your efforts on amplifying this and
setting a model for the whole country.

I also guarantee, Chairman Waldron,
that there is an appetite not just from DOL but
also from, as Brent was saying, private
philanthropy. There is a lot of private philanthropy that also would be very excited about engaging in this and we could also help do some matchmaking on that front as well.

CHAIR WALDRON: I'm absolutely excited for what I'm hearing. It is awesome. We will be reaching out to you. It's a breath of fresh air we're hearing. We have been a community forgotten by everybody but us so we're happy to hear there may be new opportunities for this administration. We will definitely follow up. Thank you very much.

I'm sorry for my council members that had a couple of questions but we've run out of time and our next speaker I'm assuming is available. Thank you very much, Suzi. We look forward to engaging you in the immediate future.

MS. LEVINE: Wonderful. Thank you so much. I look forward to it. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you so much, Athena, for coordinating this and thanks for the invitation.
Bye.

CHAIR WALDRON: I did some adjustments on my camera. Can you hear me better now?

MS. BROWN: Yes.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you.

So our next speaker, Anthony Morgan Rodman, is a Cherokee and Osage from Oklahoma, and a graduate of Harvard University and the University of Arizona, School of Law. He is the executive director of the White House Council on Native American Affairs that includes regions from across the federal government.

Mr. Rodman, I want to thank you very much for taking the time in speaking with our Council today.

MR. RODMAN: Thank you, Chairman.

Greetings NAETC members, tribal advocates, and colleagues. Again, my name is Morgan Rodman. I'm Cherokee and Osage from Oklahoma where I am currently. Again, thank you for inviting me to the Native American Employment and Training Council. It's an honor to engage
with you today.

   Every day I'm humbled by the immense
depth of expertise, talent, and bravery of the
tribal leaders and advocates who push the
positive changes. My goal is to be of service to
you in those changes while serving as Executive
Director of the White House Council on Native
American Affairs.

   I'm also grateful to serve under the
leadership of Secretary Haaland who is the chair
of the White House Council. And under the
leadership of principle deputy assistant
secretary and assistant secretary nominee Bryan
Newland. And, of course, President Biden's White
House leadership team who are integral to the
success of the White House Council.

   Today I want to share with you
information about what is the White House Council
and how it operates including the six White House
Council Native American Affairs Committees, the
role of the executive director, how the Council
strives to be a valuable resource and inter-
agency body for tribes and tribal communities, and the White House Council events on the horizon.

President Obama formed the White House Council via Executive Order 13647 in June of 2013 to improve coordination of federal programs and the use of resources available to tribal communities. The White House Council strives to promote prosperity and resiliency for tribal communities to improve federal engagement with tribes, stronger inter-agency coordination, and policy recommendations.

The Executive Order also calls for the Council to work with the White House to put on the White House Tribal Nation's Conference which moving forward will be the White House Tribal Nation's Summit. The Executive Order also calls for the Council to meet at least three times a year, makes the permanent chair the Secretary of the Interior, and identifies as council members the cabinet heads and senior White House leadership.
As a personal note, I must share that seeing cabinet members and heads of White House offices like the Domestic Policy Council convene in a room or meet virtually to strategize about how to improve federal programs so that the federal government can better uphold trust and treaty responsibilities. That's not something I'll forget.

That level of federal leadership involvement and attention signifies to me that the administration's leadership is seeking to promote an understanding of tribal nations across the government and to embed a wide-ranging understanding of the trust and treaty responsibilities beyond just a few agencies. This is also an occurrence that should not be unique in that these high-level meetings should continue well into future administrations.

The Council Chair and the council members set the priorities of the White House Council based on tribal leader input from consultations, tribal consortia events,
individual travel meetings, written travel communications, and more.

The Council then organizes into smaller subgroups or committees to better organize the inter-agency efforts. The committees are comprised of political appointees and career staff and are formed when a cabinet member volunteers his or her agency to lead or co-lead any given area. The committees are one of the primary vehicles for tribal engagement with the Council and can serve as an opportunity for tribes to weigh in and support the development of initiatives.

The committees of the Biden-Harris administration include the Committee on Climate Change, Tribal Homelands, and Treaties, which is led by BOI, EPA, and USDA and recognizes that indigenous peoples are on the frontlines of climate change the world over and, in particular, the United States. This committee recognizes tribes as the original stewards of these lands, re-enforces treaty rights, and supports tribes in
the race against climate change.

The Health Committee is co-led by HHS, Veterans Affairs, and USDA, and it recognizes that prosperous and resilient tribal nations are also healthy tribal nations. This committee will support initiatives that deliver on the trust and treaty responsibility of healthcare to tribes and individual Indians. This will be especially important as tribes continue to overcome the devastating impacts of COVID-19 from this past year.

The Council also has the Education Committee, which is co-led by DOI and the Department of Education. Similar to Health, the federal government has trust and treaty obligations to tribes for education and nations are only as strong as their citizen's health and education. This committee will assist tribes with a broad range of federal resources to promote education for all tribal citizens and health tribal communities overcome the educational detriments caused by COVID-19.
Next is the Economic Development, Energy, and Infrastructure Committee which is co-led by SBA, Department of Commerce, Department of Transportation, and Department of Energy. Tribes have the ability to be the leading economic drivers in their regions and nationally and some are doing just that.

Some tribes contribute billions of dollars each year to their state's economy and that's not just gaming. You can't have economic development either without energy transmission, broadband, roads, and bridges just to name a few and this committee will be focusing on reinforcing those pillars for strong economies.

Another important group is the Public Safety and Justice Committee which is co-led by the Department of Justice and DOI. Violence against indigenous peoples is a serious and systemic crisis that has gone unaddressed and has been underfunded for generations. This committee will leverage every federal resource to be a force multiplier in preventing violence and
ensuring accountability for crimes. This committee will work on initiatives for protecting tribal people and tribal lands.

Last we have the International Indigenous Issues Committee. This committee will focus on matters like the repatriation of human remains and sacred items to tribes. It also includes dealing with the interconnected effects of climate change on international indigenous populations and border issues involving U.S. tribes.

In the spirit of President Biden's memorandum on tribal consultation, these committees will be scheduling times to engage tribes on their proposed work products and priorities so that tribes can offer guidance, share their expertise, and help drive progress.

I'll be working on a public facing page so that tribes can see who across the government is supporting the Council, who are the committee leads, and what is being worked on. In the meanwhile, please reach out to me if you have
questions. My role as executive director is essentially the worker bee.

I work closely with the White House, other agencies, the six inter-agency committees to execute the priorities of the Council Chair, Secretary Haaland, Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs nominee Bryan Newland, the White House and, critically, tribes. The executive director is, and has always been, situated at DOI which is where the Council Chair is, Secretary of the Interior.

The committees are striving to wrap up deliverables that will result in better products and more effective programs for tribes and tribal communities and are looking to make long-term positive change in the government's understanding and respect of the trust, responsibility, and treaty rights.

As far as next steps for the White House Council, the committees will be engaging with tribes on the committee work streams and start establishing solid relationships with
tribes for collaborations. The Council will also
be considering other options for tribal
engagement as some tribal organizations have
submitted ideas on how tribes can play an even
bigger role.

There will be another cabinet-level
meeting of the Council in late summer where
updates on the committee work will be provided
and planning will be underway for the flagship
tribal federal event, the White House Tribal
Nation Summit, for later this year.

In closing, the White House Council on
Native American Affairs was developed in response
to long-standing tribal requests that a cabinet-
level body addressed tribal issues and uphold the
trust and treaty responsibilities across the
government.

We have an opportunity now with the
first Native American Secretary of the Interior,
Deb Haaland, at the helm of the White House
Council, and with Assistant Secretary nominee
Bryan Newland, who is also a former tribal
leader, and White House leadership to make long-
standing, even permanent, positive changes in
federal services for all Indian Country.

I look forward to working with you all
and other tribal leaders in building a strong
foundation for all the good things to come. I'm
happy to take some questions. Thank you.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you very much.
I'm glad to see that process in place and I'm
sure you will be getting correspondences.

Are there any questions from the
Council? We have a question from Joe Quintana.

MR. QUINTANA: Good day. Joe
Quintana, Region 6. Appreciate you joining us
today. Hope you and yours are all well,
especially as we start to come through the
pandemic.

MR. RODMAN: Thank you.

MR. QUINTANA: Not too much a
question. Of course, we appreciate the new
administration's response in working with tribal
nations and native people across the U.S. We
know that we have an uphill battle, especially coming out of the previous administration, the challenges that we face there in regards to communication and output. Even just sharing our voices which has been difficult to do.

We understand that having now one of our own in, Secretary of the Interior Haaland, now representing us in a lot of different ways, it doesn't lie within one person. It really relies in all of us, especially leaders across the U.S. to be able to seek movement on behalf of our communities whom we serve.

The only thing I would like to uplift is as we start to reach out and, of course, there are going to be opportunities to share voices, as we look to people, even people represented on this leadership council, to be able to express what we're seeing on the ground, not only within the reservation communities, but also the urban centers as well where we have our unique challenges.

Oftentimes those become even more
marginalized and made individual because it
solely focuses on reservation communities. We
understand that the pandemic is hitting us all
very differently and we've all adapted and come
to this point.

Now we're looking ahead to the
recovery phase and looking at long-term communal
change and how we can actually uplift our
communities so that they have access to upward
mobility and to a greater quality of life so that
they are not always feeling like they are left
out or that they can't provide for either
themselves or their colleagues as a whole. I
definitely want to share that. I appreciate you
being here today. Thank you again.

MR. RODMAN: Thank you, Mr. Quintana,
and that's a great point with the urban
perspective as well. That issue will be in some
of the committee's work streams so thank you.

CHAIR WALDRON: The Chair recognizes
Jacob and then Kay.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Thank you,
Chairman. Just a quick comment. I want to thank
Mr. Rodman for his presentation today.
Appreciate all your hard work and dedication to
strengthen Indian Country.

I thought I heard you are a University
of Arizona College of Law graduate. Is that
correct?

MR. RODMAN: Yes, sir.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: On behalf of
Professor Hershey and Professor Rob Williams, I
want to say hello to you.

MR. RODMAN: Thank you, yes. Some
luminaries in my book. I really appreciated that
education. Thank you.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: I just want to say
quickly thank you and appreciate all your work.

MR. RODMAN: Thank you. I appreciate
your work.

CHAIR WALDRON: The Chair recognizes
Kay.

MEMBER SEVEN: Good late morning from
Idaho with Nez Perce tribe.
MR. RODMAN: Hi.

MEMBER SEVEN: Nice to meet you and good to hear that we have a presence in the White House once again. I was looking at the agencies participating in the virtual meetings and many of the agencies listed are federal agencies that have an opportunity to become an active participant under the legislation known as Public Law 102-477 recently amended by Public Law 115-93.

I feel this legislation allows Indian Country or tribes to use this legislative authority to continue with our platform of tribal workforce development and to consolidate other services that are relative to the individuals who serve the socioeconomic challenges.

As 477 tribes we've been going through our ebb and flows with federal agencies for too long. We look forward to this administration to help our arrangement to strengthen a memorandum of agreement between the 12 federal agencies that will truly bring out the vision and enhance the
purpose of that legislation. You know, what the White House in the previous administration, there was one interesting ETA, or employment training administrator, by the name of John Pallasch.

He began listening to the tribes that were exercising the 477 authority and he had a real strong understanding and belief in how tribes are doing this and was wanting to gain more information on what, I guess, the Department of Labor could do to embrace the original intent of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act when it was introduced in 2015.

At that time the Secretary of Labor announced that this legislation is what Congress wanted, was to deal with the fragmentation of federal services in Washington, D.C. to do some silo implosion. I believe this White House Council could help address how fragmented are our services at the federal level when we award grants, contracts, and agreements with tribes.

How is it that we can better deliver braided synergy programs based on tribal self-
determination and self-governance principles. I just wanted to mention that at this point through our group we're having a 477 tribal workgroup meeting tomorrow.

Our current concern is to have our annual meeting in September between a White House representative and our co-chair of our group and address the Memorandum of Agreement under Public Law 115-93. And also to resolve some reporting requirements and get that taken care of. Thank you.

MR. RODMAN: Thank you, Ms. Seven. You raised MOU and some of the other inter-agency issues. From this Council's perspective if there are inter-agency opportunities, I'm happy -- if you want to share that with Athena Brown or other leadership from Labor, and then we can work to see how that can be addressed by the inter-agency work of the Council.

That's really the bread and butter of the White House Council is agencies working together for the benefit of tribes and tribal
communities. If you see opportunities, we can
work through Labor or you can reach out to me
directly with those ideas.

    MEMBER SEVEN: Right. We'll look
definitely to the Department of Interior as our
legal agency so we have that opportunity and have
a good working relationship with Labor for sure.

    MR. RODMAN: Great.

    CHAIR WALDRON: So the Chair
recognizes Kim Carroll.

    Thank you, Kay.

    MEMBER CARROLL: Thank you, Chairman.

Kim Carroll, Other Disciplines. I just wanted to
follow up on what Kay was talking about. I'm
very happy to hear about this inter-agency
council. That's exactly what we need. If you
look into the Memorandum of Agreement 102-477 as
amended, you'll find that it appears certainly to
us, to tribes that work with 477, that the
federal agencies try to rewrite them all
basically through the MOA. Our contention is
that the things that they've included go against
the law.

I think it's very important that the White House take a stance on this. Congress has asked them to look at this again, to ask for reports from them. The agencies have been very slow to respond. Certainly anything can be done to assist in this effort would go a long way to helping tribal workforce development. Thank you.

MR. RODMAN: Thank you for sharing that, Ms. Carroll.

CHAIR WALDRON: Are there any other questions from the Council?

I will just say thank you very much, Mr. Rodman. It's great to have you here. We look forward to dialogue. Just to emphasize, sometimes we feel forgotten by the federal government. President Biden in his commitment to Indian Country we are looking forward to those results affecting our youth so we can rise in our socioeconomic standing.

Suicide is the number one cause of death and let's put an end to that. I think that
we may be in the beginning of some of these new opportunities. Thank you very much for the time you spent with us today and we will be in touch.

MR. RODMAN: Thank you, Chairman Waldron. Thank you, Council. I look forward to the work ahead. Talk soon.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you very much.

We've got just a couple of minutes real quickly before our next speaker. I don't know if our next speaker is available.

Jacob, can you just take over for the next speaker for a moment because I have to hit the men's room.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: I'm sorry, Darrell. You said you want me to facilitate the meeting?

CHAIR WALDRON: Yeah, just the next speaker. I've got to make a quick run to the restroom.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Okay.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thanks.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: While we're
waiting for the second -- the next speaker, are there any comments thus far, or questions of the meeting agenda?

MS. BROWN: The next speaker may already be on.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: I'm sorry. Go ahead, Athena?

MS. BROWN: Is Bryan Newland on the line?

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: I don't see him on my screen anywhere.

MS. BROWN: Okay. So this is Athena, the Designated Federal Officer. Jacob, maybe we can take this quick time to just go back and address the request earlier to talk about the transition -- I think it was a transition paper that Darrell wanted to have a discussion on.

I would suggest that we move that discussion to 4:00 during the recap if that's agreeable to the Council. We have a pretty full agenda today so I'm not sure we're going to be able to squeeze that in anytime today other than
when we discuss the recap.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Okay. I see Bryan is joining.

MS. BROWN: Okay.

MR. NEWLAND: Hello.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Hello, Mr. Newland.

MR. NEWLAND: How are you?

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Good. I'm Jacob Bernal, Vice Chair of the Council. Unfortunately I don't have your bio for the proper introduction but can I defer to Chief Brown. Do you have his bio for the introduction?

MS. BROWN: Yes, I do. One moment, please.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Okay. Welcome, Bryan.

MR. NEWLAND: Thank you so much for having me.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: We'll have you begin as soon as we can complete your proper introduction.
MR. NEWLAND: Oh.

MS. BROWN: Yes. I'm just pulling it up on my screen. Thank you, Mr. Newland, for joining us.

Bryan Newland is an Ojibwe from the Bay Mills Indian Community where he recently completed his tenure as tribal president. First, I would like to congratulate you on your recent nomination as the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

We have enjoyed a really good working relationship with the Department of the Interior for many years through the 477 program, and through our joint-sponsored Native American Indian Employment and Training Conferences where we have both Department of Labor, Section 166 grantees, and the 477 grantees combined audience.

Today we have members on this Council that represent both the Section 166 program at the Department of Labor, and also the 477 grantees from the Department of the Interior, under that agency as the lead agency.
Again, thank you for agreeing to join us today
and we look forward to hearing from you. With
that I'll turn it back to you, Mr. Newland.

MR. NEWLAND: Migwetch and thank you
for having me here today. I'm really excited to
be just a part of everything that's going on in
this administration in terms of making
investments in support of Indian Country.

Just a little bit more about my
background briefly. This is my second time on
the merry-go-round here at the Department of the
Interior. I worked with many of you when I was
in President Obama's administration as a policy
adviser in the Office of the Assistant Secretary.
Now I've been blessed have the opportunity to
come back and serve hopefully as the Assistant
Secretary.

Before I came here I served as tribal
chairperson where, before the pandemic hit, we
were in the process of making a lot of
investments in our own communities all with the
goal in mind of making sure that we were creating
and retaining wealth with in our tribal community.

As many of you know, one of the challenges in Indian Country is that financial capital and healing capital, just any type of generation of wealth from Indian communities and Indian resources tends to be taken out of tribal communities and that's something we want to make sure we are focusing on so that people can use their skills to lead fulfilling lives in their tribal communities and that includes working in jobs and applying their passions and their talents at home to serve their people and their families.

So I haven't been on for much of the meeting today but I suspect you've heard a lot about the administration's investments in Indian Country through the jobs plan, the budget proposal, and the rescue plan. I wish I could tell you that I was going to come here and break new ground, but that's a message we're really excited to tell.
Again, when I was working at the department under President Obama's administration, we were coming off the 2008 financial collapse and there was the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that infused at the time record amounts of money into Indian Country, but that was soon followed by things like sequester and other sorts of budget cuts that really stalled that momentum.

Having gone through that experience and now being back at the department and participating in these record investments in Indian Country is really exciting because I know, and I know many of you know, what types of opportunities that will generate in tribal communities in terms of infrastructure and jobs and long-lasting investments in human capital. The rescue plan, as you are all aware, infused more than $31 billion dollars of capital in Indian Country.

At the Department the President has requested more than $4 billion in the FY '22
budget for Indian Affairs which is more than a 20 percent increase and a lot of that is being put into things like land consolidation and support of tribal governments.

The jobs plan has key components for infrastructure in Indian Country, one of them being investing in broadband development. You may have seen that Vice President Harris, Secretary Raimondo, and Secretary Haaland from the Department of the Interior recently announced a grant program for $1 billion of broadband infrastructure grant funding across Indian Country.

I'm sure all of you know in tribal communities during the pandemic when we were all forced to move online, tribes that didn't have access to broadband or access to eCommerce markets suffered even more than the rest of Indian Country which suffered more than the rest of the country.

The disparity between economic opportunity in places with broadband and those
without it's going to continue to grow unless we
address it, especially in places like Alaska and
many tribal communities in Alaska in very rural
tribal communities like mine here in northern
Michigan.

Having broadband, and access to
broadband, is going to be key to making sure
people can complete their education or workforce
training or to engage in eCommerce. These
investments are going to help Indian Country
catch up to the rest of the country to make sure
we all have economic opportunities.

When it comes to labor and workforce
training and career opportunities in building
upon a broadband investment, we want to make sure
that we're partnering with tribal colleges and
universities. Over the last 40 years tribal
colleges and universities have just been a
lifeline for so many people in so many
communities in providing access to people in
Indian Country to higher education and the tools
that you need to have opportunities to work in
fulfilling careers.

As we go forward we want to make sure that we are continuing to partner with tribal colleges and universities and connect tribal colleges and universities to their students across Indian Country and make sure that they continue to be doorways for opportunity for people in Indian Country.

In addition, actually just before I came into this meeting this afternoon, we were wrapping up a consultation session on the Department of the Interior's Buy Indian Act regulations.

As we're talking about these billions of dollars the government is looking to invest in Indian Country, we want to make sure that translates to opportunity for people in Indian Country so that it's not just money coming in and leaving Indian Country right away.

That money can be used and invested in Indian-owned firms and small businesses that will do the work of building this infrastructure and
that those Indian-owned firms and businesses will hire Indian people and community members across Indian Country so that these are job opportunities and career opportunities for people.

These Buy Indian Act regulations are going to be a critical component of that to make sure that we are actually implementing the Buy Indian Act effectively. We hope to wrap up those consultations this summer and get to a proposed rule yet this year so we can finalize that and put that in place.

I don't want to belabor the point anymore. I'm sure you guys will continue to hear from us and the administration about the investments that we're making in Indian Country in the infrastructure. I just appreciate the work you all do. I'm happy to stick around for a bit if you have any questions for me. Thank you so much for your time.

CHAIR WALDRON: So at this point the floor is open for questions from council members.
We have Kay Care and then Joe.

The Chair recognizes Kay.

MEMBER SEVEN: Bryan, this is Kay Seven. I'm with the Nez Perce Tribe in Idaho. Congratulations on the position. It finally happened and we're moving forward with your leadership.

The Nez Perce Tribe is what we call a 477 tribe and the Department of Interior is our lead federal agency. In this administration I look forward to a productive four years with the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Education, and Office of Indian Energy to be a good lead working with other federal agencies building inter-agency relations with the understanding that if we build synergy amongst each other, consider what monies we can legislatively integrate, consolidate, broad together for tribal communities based on the tribal self-determination and governance planning that we make it work in this administration. I'll keep my comments simple. I'm looking
forward to some good four years.

MR. NEWLAND: Migwetch. Thank you, Kay. I appreciate you bringing up the 477 program. I know you all have probably been talking about that a lot at this session. That's something I worked on when I was at the department before and it was more nascent at that time. I know how you mentioned braiding these programs together and that's exactly what it is. We want to make sure that we are not an impediment to tribes designing.

That's really the next level of self-governance and self-determination is trying to design and implement these programs in a way that makes sense for their communities instead of getting a little pot of funds here, little pot of funds here, and not being very effective and putting them together in a way to meet their needs. I agree with you and appreciate you highlighting that.

CHAIR WALDRON: The Chair recognizes Joe.
MR. QUINTANA: Good day. Joe Quintana, Region 6. I appreciate you joining us today. I hope you and yours are all well, especially as we come through the pandemic.

I appreciate that you talked more about educational achievement and preparing our workers. Of course, we're looking at long-term impact of getting our people trained for positions for them to be successful long term for allowing them to be self-sustaining and improving their quality of life in general.

You did talk about working with tribal colleges and the universities. I would also add working with CBOs, the community based organizations, who have built legitimacy, in particular established within the American Indian communities themselves. In particular, working with urban centers.

I think also working and looking at trade school development. We know that not everyone is going to receive that two or four-year diploma and how can we best prepare our
members so that they are positioned for reaching
the job certification so that they can have
success in high-skilled labor markets.

You talked about building roads and
building infrastructure. That's tremendous, but
we want our own members to build those roads. We
want our own members to have access to
modernizing our infrastructure as we go forward.
And not just looking at that, but looking at
doing coding in cyber security.

We know that we're entering a unique
market where the job market is going to be
changed across the nation and how can we prepare
our members for an even more competitive job
market than what they saw before. Most
importantly, during a time of great unemployment.
I also wanted to talk briefly about we look
towards economic stability but without
exploiting, of course, the natural environment.

We want, of course, to improve green
energy no matter what it is, but making sure that
it's cost effective all around and that we have
the right people in place to make sure whether or not it's energy development that it's coming back to the tribe. And, if there is any excess, that we are able to give it back to our neighboring communities, of course, at a cost if that's possible, but ensuring that we have the right people on the ground for that.

And I know that most recently there was the termination of the Keystone Pipeline Project, but looking across Indian Country as a whole and how many other projects that are happening across our borders that we're starting to see impact us. Just wanted to uplift that as we go forward.

Thank you again for your time.

MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Joe. I appreciate that. If there was an amen button on Zoom, I would have been hitting that as you were talking over and over again. I couldn't agree more.

I just want to go back because you mentioned about not everybody wants a two and a
four-year degree. For some people they don't want it, or they feel like they don't need it. One of the things is gaming opened up an opportunity for tribes to -- for people in tribal communities to just earn a paycheck.

Even if it was not a fulfilling job, it allowed people to put food on the table. The next step was to get people into college or workforce training. Oftentimes they left tribal communities because there weren't fulfilling jobs for them at home.

I think that's the next piece is that there are so many different -- you guys all know this better than I do. There are so many different types of jobs out there that people have a passion for.

So many times in our community people feel like they can't apply those passions and their skills where they want to live. So many Indian people want to live in their tribal communities but they don't have the ability to do that and lead a fulfilling life. That's the next
piece of this puzzle.

There's economic opportunity for people but we want to make sure that it's meeting their personhood at their core, their dignity in making sure that they can lead fulfilling lives at home. That's another thing. I'm glad to hear you speak about that you want to be a part of that.

CHAIR WALDRON: Do we have any questions from the council members? I don't always see the little tan hand on my end. Great. Sounds like we covered the topic. It's a pleasure having you.

I apologize for calling you Kay Care. It was a time long ago that I remembered and I'm getting old now. Kay Seven. We've been friends a long time. I'm sorry, Kay. I was not here to read your bio. I apologize. We do appreciate you being here.

I think, you know, what's being echoed is that we are looking for opportunities out of this administration. I made a comment on one of
the cases that I feel like Moses wandering around
with milk and honey for 50 years and not getting
in the habit. We are kind of excited about it.
I think the message is we need help from this
administration. There's been a lot of promises.

MR. NEWLAND: Mr. Chairman, I
appreciate that. If I can just add to that. One
thing that I've learned from my time here before
and then being back serving the tribal community
is that this is -- in order for this to work this
has got to be a joint effort. The best ideas
don't originate from within the administration.
I view it as our job to lift them up and put them
into action.

I really invite and encourage you and
others on this council to bring those best ideas
forward with action plans because we have four
years. You all know it's not that long of a
window but we have a window here to do some big
things in Indian Country. If we are working
together, I think we can make the most of it.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you. Those are
encouraging words. We will definitely be
pushing. We're not all young people on this
committee. Some of us have nothing to lose but
success. Thank you very much.

MR. NEWLAND: Migwetch. Thank you so
much.

CHAIR WALDRON: Let's see. We are a
little ahead of schedule by about 10 minutes.

Athena, how do you feel about a break
for people who want to do that, or do you want to
move on ahead so maybe we have more time with the
Honorable --

MS. BROWN: I don't think our next
speaker is on the line. I don't have a problem
with a five to 10-minute break.

CHAIR WALDRON: Let's take a quick
five to 10-minute break. I drank three bottles
of water. I had to go. See you back in five
minutes.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
went off the record at 2:20 p.m. and resumed at
2:30 p.m.)
CHAIR WALDRON: Okay. So Ms. Libby Washburn, she is a Special Assistant with the President, awesome, for Native America Affairs. She is now at the White House with the Domestic Policy Council is her official heading on our agenda where we are, she shares a Special Assistant with the President on the White House Domestic Policy.

Ms. Washburn graduated from the University of Oklahoma and the University of New Mexico School of Law. She is a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma. We want to thank you for joining us today. We look forward to our follow-on with you. Welcome to the Advisory Council. You have the floor, ma'am.

MS. WASHBURN: Thank you. Thank you for inviting me. I am happy to be here and connecting with all of you and I look forward to working with you. I came prepared to talk about a couple different things. I hope that it's not duplicative. I know you have had some great speakers leading up to this, so hopefully some
things will be new.

But, again, to reiterate, Libby Washburn, and I am in the Domestic Policy Council. I serve as the Special Assistant to the President for Native Affairs and cover the Native portfolio with PaaWee Rivera. He is on the call today, I saw his name. He is the Tribal Affairs Director in Intergovernmental, and so really the two of us do a lot together.

I am going to speak and then I'll probably let him jump in if he wants to if I have missed something, but I am happy to be here today and appreciate the invite.

I wanted to first talk to you about the Biden Administration's focus. Employment has been a huge focus, getting people to work, finding opportunities for Tribes to have more money and to be able to do projects, and so that has been the driving force behind what PaaWee and I have been doing since we came on.

We were both on the first day of January 20th and it has been a ride, just a few
months, it feels a lot longer, but a lot of the focus in the beginning, I think you all know, was the American Rescue Plan. And so when we came into office that was the big focus and it was successful. We got $32 billion for Tribes, the largest financial investment that we have seen in Indian Country ever and in one fell swoop.

And so a lot of this money will -- There is different tranches of money, and so I think you have seen some of it going to HHS, Indian Health Service, some of it has gone out through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Transportation has funding, and HUD has put out some additional funding through the American Rescue Plan, and so lots of different pieces that are moving that kind of supplement what we already see out there.

So, you know, every year HUD has an annual appropriation. We just put an additional tranche of money in the HUD. And so we are hoping to kind of see an uptick of building, an uptick of rehabbing and, you know, working on
houses but actually seeing some new construction as well. We are hoping to be able to get to some things that we haven't been able to do for a long time, but then we also in the Rescue Plan put $20 billion towards tribal government, and that was a first.

We put that money in. It is in the process of being distributed and I think many of you are probably watching it from your own tribal perspective, but the money is going out.

The first tranche is, I think we are at maybe 70, 80 percent of it is out, and the first tranche of funding from the $20 billion given out through Treasury Department is based on population and self-certified numbers that the Tribes gave to the BIA and then the BIA shared with Treasury. That money is going out and then there will be a second tranche of funding that will soon start flowing out, but this money is going directly to Tribes for the Tribes to decide what is the best thing for the community, and there are some parameters that were put on the
A lot of it is related to COVID, so expenses that were generated through COVID, but there is also the money is allowed to be spent for infrastructure, in particular broadband and critical water infrastructures. So if Tribes choose to do that, and we hope that they will and, you know, any existing projects that have been lingering for a while, this money can be used for, but we're also hoping that jobs will come out of this as well as we start to build out infrastructure for broadband and water.

But on the heels of the Rescue Plan we have the American Jobs Plan and it is currently pending before Congress and we hope that you all are watching this one. This one is a big one and it is going to help Indian Country with additional infrastructure needs and with jobs and the goal is to get people to work and to start to fix some of this aging infrastructure that we all know Indian Country has a problem and we need more money in infrastructure.
And so what we are hoping to see is we are hoping to go big on a continuation of critical water infrastructure, so we're hoping to put quite a bit of money into that, broadband, and so this will be additional funding into the broadband arena, road, housing, climate change, and many other things.

But what we are looking at and hoping for, and I think, you know, all of it is going to depend on what happens with the Jobs Plan, but what we were looking at in our thinking was tens of billions of dollars flowing into Indian Country. These are just a few of the main buckets. There are other things. At Interior Department there is quite a bit of abandoned mines and orphaned wells and a lot of that in Indian Country, and so there is money there.

There is money for electricity, energy development, and there will be funding for Tribes but then lots of other money that Tribes will be able to access as well and what we hope to see is a wildly robust infrastructure build-out in
Indian Country and with it to follow lots of jobs.

And so, you know, we'll definitely want your help in this arena, what we should be doing as we are structuring it. We are working with Congress right now and, you know, so any language changes, anything that you need. A lot of people have told us that they wanted technical assistance, they want the ability for capacity building for Tribes, and so, you know, this is definitely my first time to have a dialogue with all of you, and welcome any thoughts that you have.

As we put a lot of money towards this what we don't want to be is down the road and saying, oh, I wish we would have known and we could have added in this language, so welcome any and all thoughts that you have in this area.

Another big thing that we have been working on in this Administration is the FY 22 budget. We have just rolled it out a few weeks ago and we had a 14 percent increase for Tribal
Affairs overall, and that is kind of adding up every single agency. We went up 14 percent, but the big one is with the Indian Health Service budget we went up approximately 35 percent and we put a large, extra tranche of money into Indian Health Service, more than $2 billion extra.

We know that there has been a lag and we're wanting to try to start to get the appropriate amount of money into the Indian Health Service budget. It was a priority on the campaign and the President maintained that priority and put a significant tranche in. I think you all have been following budgets probably for a long time and know that this is a big boost and we don't often see this in one cycle from one budget to another, and so hopefully you are watching this and you see that it is a serious commitment that the President has to Indian Country.

But overall we are seeing lots of funding and another exciting thing with the health budget is that for the first time the
President is suggesting that we have advanced appropriations for healthcare and with a move to looking to making it more permanent, you know, how do we not have to worry from year to year on a discretionary budget, in particular with healthcare.

You know, you don't want the government shut down and health services to shut down. So this advanced appropriation will help us whether those types of activities or, you know, congressional just debating, and it will give us more peace of mind and the ability to carry out healthcare in a safe and continuing way.

Also, moving towards some mandatory funding at the Department of the Interior, they are looking at moving some pots of funding into the mandatory fund, in particular related to Indian water rights settlements and 105L and contract support costs. And so we have been advocating for that for years and so this was a great budget process for Indian Affairs this
year, so I just want to make sure that we are flagging that.

   A lot of what we have been doing has to do with funding and just little pots of money are also out there flowing right now. So the Department of Commerce just recently put out a notice of funding opportunity for $1 billion for tribal broadband.

   So we really have been seeing a big build-out in infrastructure areas and what we hope will generate lots of jobs, lots of additional technology, and making sure that Reservations, Indian Country is connected.

   The goal is 100 percent coverage on broadband for all of Indian Country, and so that is the goal that we are aiming for and this $1 billion is kind of the first rung of what we see as the overall need and then we are hoping that the Jobs Plan will then come in with more broadband funding.

   Also, other little pots of money are coming out of various things with the Rescue Plan
and we will be seeing additional funding opportunities, grants that Tribes will be able to access, and we are happy to work with you on that in the future letting you know about these opportunities, but we hope that all of these opportunities will generate more development in Indian Country, more jobs, more of the things that we want to see and, you know, putting people to work, getting economies going after COVID.

And so we'll be seeing other opportunities coming up in the recent, you know, days, weeks, months ahead, we'll be having more opportunities roll out.

I have a few other things that I wanted to raise. I do want to offer PaaWee the ability if he wants to to jump in. I am happy to continue to talk, but, PaaWee, if you want to introduce yourself and if there is anything you want to talk about.

MR. RIVERA: Sure. Thanks, Libby.

And for those of you that I haven't met before, PaaWee Rivera. I serve as our Senior Advisor and
Director of Tribal Affairs in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Libby and I work closely on a lot of the work that is coming out of the White House. I think Libby, obviously, did an amazing job summarizing a lot of the big substantive work for Indian Country and a lot of the exciting things that we were actually able to roll out in the first 100 days.

A few things that I wanted to highlight was just around the President's directive really to emphasize tribal consultation, ensuring that on Day 6 of his Administration he signed the Executive Order to mandate that all agencies create their tribal consultation plans after consulting with Tribes.

So many of you may have participated in those and we thank you for your time. I know there was a lot in that condensed period of time, but what that really did is set the tone for incoming political appointees to really understand tribal consultation and really set the
direction of Indian Country being at the forefront of many of our issues that are moving in the Administration.

So I hope that you will continue to stay engaged with the Administration across all agencies as tribal consultation opportunities present themselves and also that you will see this initial step as the first step in our ongoing dialogue with Indian Country.

I also do want to mention that later in the year we will be having, we will be reinstating the Tribal Nation Summit, which we renamed from The Conference to The Summit to really emphasize the nation to nation relationship, and that you will remember from the Obama Administration.

That is the annual summit with tribal leaders where the Administration has the chance to directly meet with tribal leaders, the President has the opportunity to directly meet with tribal leaders, and really a focus of the White House Council was one of the big convening
opportunities for tribal leaders to really engage with the Administration.

I know you heard from Morgan earlier in this session about what the White House Council is working on, and so there is a lot of different culminating activities that will be happening throughout the year so we'll just ask for your continued engagement as we look for your thought leadership and your support.

As Libby mentioned we have a number of big initiatives. I would say the big one right now is the infrastructure plan. So for those that are willing to be publicly supportive, you know, we certainly welcome that and know that, you know, every -- Expressing Indian Country's needs and interests in seeing the infrastructure package makes an incredible difference.

We saw, you know, that support really carry weight in the American Rescue Plan, so I just ask for your public support there and your thought leadership as we roll out these programs and how they really should be integrated in
Indian Country.

I think that's what I had for this piece, but we'll just offer, you know, myself as a resource in the White House and, you know, my primary role is obviously in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and that's really to also emphasize the government to government relationships with our Tribal Nations and our tribal leaders.

So I'll turn it back to Libby, but that's -- I look forward to working with this body and look forward to connecting with everyone here.

MS. WASHBURN: All right. Thank you. Thanks, PaaWee. So I think those are some of the big things that we have been working on. You know, we've got a ton of little things that kind of are day-to-day. We have been doing a lot of listening sessions. We have had very substantive dialogues on -- I think we've held about 20 to 22 listening sessions that the White House has hosted with tribal leaders, but we would love to
explore one kind of based on some of the work that you are doing.

That is an area that we have not necessarily had a listening session on, so I appreciate the opportunity to be here with you, but also offer that if, you know, you have a discrete topic that you would like to talk to the White House about or if we could set up kind of a broader listening session. We tend to invite other offices within the White House, not just the Domestic Policy Council and Intergovernmental Affairs, we'll reach out to the Climate Office, to the National Economic Council, to the National Security Council, to CEQ, and others that are interested.

And definitely, you know, this is an area we have been thinking about, so let us know, happy to brainstorm now or you can reach out to me after this call or after your meetings conclude, but I just wanted to offer you that opportunity. We're happy to take questions and, you know, if you just want to have an open
dialogue that's fine, too. Jacob, I think your hand is up first.

CHAIR WALDRON: The Chair recognizes Jacob.

MS. WASHBURN: Oh, sorry.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Washburn and Mr. Rivera. We really do appreciate the information.

You know, earlier you mentioned the American Rescue Plan literally poured billions of dollars into tribal communities and urban communities and that primarily was channeled or distributed to the Indian Health Service. So transitioning to the American Jobs Plan has there been any consideration to channel or use a funding mechanism for allocation through the DINAP Program, the Section 166 Department of Labor program, because they have the expertise and the years of history of working with grantees, approximately 175 tribal and urban programs across the country?

So my question is has any
consideration been given to a funding mechanism whereas dollars from the American Jobs Plan could be channeled into Section 166 DINAP Program for distribution across the country?

MS. WASHBURN: And thank you for that question. No, we have not talked about it where I have been having conversations, but that doesn't mean it's not happening, but I would appreciate more information on it. So this is something that we gave some initial ideas, our initial thoughts of where we wanted the funding. We sent it over to Congress. Congress has been working on it as well.

I think you all have seen in the news there are kind of high-level discussions going on, but within each of the Senate and House Committees they have been talking about who will be able to list out the funding that, where they want to put it. So last time the Senate Indian Affairs Committee was charged with placing the funding in various places and they were given a dollar amount to work with.
It's unclear if that is going to happen again or what committees will have jurisdiction. We're just not that far in yet, but that means that there is still time to do this, to make some suggestions, to offer some ideas of where funding should be.

I don't think any money went to the Department of Labor through the Rescue Plan. It went a lot of different places, not just health and human services, but it went to a lot of different agencies, but Labor did not get money that I saw, but certainly open to talking about it and passing this along if you wanted to send me more information on exactly where and what programs, what you could use, you know, how much money we're talking about, what's the best way to get it out into Indian Country, we would welcome those ideas from you.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Okay. Thank you very much. But I guess my point was that just like the Rescue Plan when it comes to the Jobs Plan could the Jobs Plan funding be allocated,
not so much the Rescue Plan, but the Jobs Plan moving forward?

MS. WASHBURN: Yes. Sorry, I was talking about the Jobs Plan moving forward. So the Rescue Plan is done. It has been passed and the money is out there and has been distributed. What we are working on right now is the Jobs Plan and where the money will go and so that's where it hasn't been -- We haven't gotten to that point yet. So they will start to pass things out of the House, send it over to the Senate, Senate will put the money where they choose to put it, it goes back to the House, and then it will be signed by the President.

So there is still time to make those suggestions, if that makes sense.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Yes. Thank you very much.

CHAIR WALDRON: Awesome. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes Kim and then Joe.

(Simultaneous speaking.)

CHAIR WALDRON: Jacob, did you have
more to your question? I'm sorry, Kim.

VICE CHAIR BERNAL: Thank you.

CHAIR WALDRON: Okay. Go ahead, Kim.

Sorry.

MEMBER CARROLL: That's okay. Thank you. Kim Carroll, Other Disciplines. You know, we are very excited to see an increase in funding for Indian and Native American programs through WIOA. However, as I am sure you are both aware, Indian programs have been underfunded drastically for quite some time. I was disappointed that it wasn't more, especially considering everything that has happened certainly in the past year.

One of the things I think that we all learned through the pandemic was that we were not prepared, that we did not have the funding that we needed to address the issues that we needed to address when we did, and I would hope that the White House would take this opportunity to provide a bit more equity in funding for workforce development for Indians and Native Americans. Thank you.
MS. WASHBURN: Thank you. Yes, definitely it's -- If you have any sort of White Paper on this, anything, I have yet to see any dollar amounts that have been asked for in the past, so if you want to send me something along those lines that is always helpful to see what you have requested in the past.

MEMBER CARROLL: We would certainly be happy to do that. Thank you.

MS. WASHBURN: Okay. Thanks.

CHAIR WALDRON: The Chair recognizes Joe.

MEMBER QUINTANA: Good day. My name is Joseph Quintana, Region 6. I appreciate the both of you being with us today. I hope that you and your families are all well, especially as we work through the pandemic.

I do want to very quickly echo and kind of add on to what Jacob and Kim had mentioned previously is in regards to current funding is making sure that we are being deliberate in where the funding is going and that
we are actually doing intentional giving.

I know I mentioned briefly earlier

with one of our presenters that this particular

166 program has been underfunded and has seen 75

percent decreases over the last 44 years, or 40

years, I'm sorry, which is tremendous, especially
during the time of pandemic.

I work in an area where there is a

large urban population which means that there is

a significant amount of loss, especially revenue
generation and things like that in order to

sustain a community based organization. And so

as we're maybe talking about Tribal Nations and

Reservation communities we can't also forget the

urban Indian centers as well, especially as the

Native population continues to grow in places

like Los Angeles, San Francisco, Minneapolis, New

York, just to name a few.

I also want to mention very briefly,
you described issues around housing, and I

appreciate that. I know that because we talk

about comprehensive services and you talked about
how there was an increase in regards to IHS funding, and that is a great thing to see because IHS is underfunded.

But as we look at the physical health of our members we also understand that they are working through grief and the many different challenges around behavioral health as well, and then also economic health and security.

In the area in the state that I am in, California, is dealing with, even prior to the pandemic, a major housing crisis. Look at San Francisco, Los Angeles, and areas like that where many relocatees and also, you know, American Indians who are migratory because of jobs or education have now gone, they are now dealing with major issues around access to stable housing.

Many of our members become multi-generational. They also became multi-family homes. During the time of pandemic this is an increased risk because, of course, we know that many of our family members may be susceptible to
the disease or in regards to our elder population
it could be extremely, pose a health risk, even
leading to death.

So as we look ahead to the future
making sure that we are being as inclusive to all
the issues that impact our members as possible.
Of course, work is one, but also all the social
determinants around us that impact us as we go
forward. I do want to uplift that.

The last thing I do want to mention
very quickly is you talked about being able to
hold the Tribal Nation Summit and that I think is
very significant across Indian Country I think to
bring that back. I think what we were lacking
was major communication with the previous
Administration, so that's welcome to see.

The one addition that I would like to
make is not leaving out those urban Indian
centers, especially community based organization
leaders across the country who can offer a
different perspective as we continue to adapt to
the challenges and we work toward the recovery
both not only for the Native community but also
to our surrounding neighbors as well. So thank
you all again.

MS. WASHBURN: Thank you. Thank you
for that. I just want to note that we are hoping
to do much more in the urban Indian setting. So
we have a briefing coming up with the Urban
Indian Organizations. It's kind of a first step,
but we will be doing more and exploring what else
we can be doing. We welcome any ideas from you
as well. We have another woman who has just
joined the Domestic Policy Council to assist
PaaWee and I, her name is Tracy Goodluck, and
urban issues will be, that's kind of a key part
of her portfolio.

She is just starting to get us
organized in that area. And so we have a
briefing session coming up later this week or
early next week, but we will be starting to
explore it. So we welcome any and all thoughts
there and additional meetings.

CHAIR WALDRON: Awesome. Thank you.
So we have a document that we can send you and it references some of the comments that Jacob and Joe were alluding to. It originally was a White Paper and now it's more a Statement of Urgency, which has gone out to the Secretary of Labor. So we would be more than happy to share it.

You know, we have both programs and 166 out to Tribal and off Reservation and we want to encourage now that we have what we think may be a breath of fresh air or a light for Indian Country that all are included and that our native communities that retrain off reservation can go back with a better opportunity to service their people.

It's a little disappointing to hear Labor received nothing from that, but maybe we can, if we have time, can change their mind and get the 166 in there. We do have 35,000 participants that we service annually that are native. Thank you very much for coming here. It's awesome to hear from you. Are there any other questions from the Council?
(No audible response.)

CHAIR WALDRON: We are right on time today, which is a pleasure to see. So thank you very much, it was a pleasure speaking with you.

MS. WASHBURN: Thank you. We appreciate the time. Thanks. Have a good meeting.

CHAIR WALDRON: So our next speaker doesn't need any introduction for me because we all know her and love her and she has fought for us for a very long time. I don't know if you are ready there, Athena. Let the record show the Chief of DINAP is going to be making a presentation announcement.

MS. BROWN: Yes, I am. Thank you, Darrell. First of all, I really want to thank all of you. Welcome back. It's so good to see all of your faces. I feel like, wow, we've been dormant for a while, locked in our respective apartments and homes. So I'm glad to see that some of us are finally coming back to the workplace, even though we stayed as busy at home,
as I know that we did in here in the office.

I appreciate the work that all of the employment and training programs have carried on throughout the pandemic. I know that when -- you know, that when it came on, everything happened so suddenly, and we found ourselves in a situation where everybody reacted and we found that more than ever we needed a lot of tools and resources to keep our programs going.

And for those many staff that have been at the frontline who can afford to take -- to not work with their clients, I very much appreciate that. So I'm happy to be on this virtual call with the members of the Council and giving a report on the update for the Division of Indian and Native American programs.

I think the most important news that we heard today is that our program is no longer proposed to be eliminated -- yay -- and that the FY 2022 budget actually calls for an increase in the funding.

But more importantly, I think that
there is a lot of exciting things going on in Department of Labor and across all federal agencies, and that's why I'm so happy that Libby Washburn and Morgan Rodman and PaaWee Rivera and Bryan Newland with the Department of the Interior, Suzi LeVine, and others have been on this call today because I really think there is great opportunities going on, and I'm very excited about it.

I think that the Indian organizations and the tribes clearly show that we're really a good -- an important part of this work that I envision. So tomorrow we are going to get an opportunity to hear from -- to open up the dialogue with senior staff in the apprenticeship program, and also to hear comments from other members of the public about how this will open up opportunities -- how this can open up opportunities in Indian country.

I know that we've been talking about apprenticeship for many years, and it has been -- it was a big focus of the last administration.
It's a focus of this administration. But I think that I have seen firsthand how this can really make an impact across Indian country, and I know that there are some grantees that have apprenticeship opportunities going. Darrell, for one, I know you have an apprenticeship program in Salt River, Pinon, Maricopa, and there are others.

But I really would like to see other grantees tap into this resource. So I hope that we have a good listening session tomorrow and a good dialogue with the apprenticeship office to talk about those things.

So, DINAP, I want to report out that DINAP is in the process of drafting the next funding opportunity announcement. As you know, next year is our competitive process where everybody is required to submit a four-year strategic plan.

So we hope to have that issued early next year to allow grantees plenty of time to work on those documents and to put together their
plan. And hopefully you're already thinking about that, because the big thrust is, you know, bringing everybody back to work and building back what -- you know, some of what we lost, and sometimes building it back better. So I want to give everybody adequate notice so that we can get that FOA issued.

Although this exclusive requirement for those grantees that participate in the 477 program were -- one of the objectives that we have discussed in our program, and right now it's in the planning concept, but I'm almost certain that it's going to work, is to work closely with our partner agency, the Department of the Interior, so that we can make it easier for tribes to apply for the 477 program at the same time we're putting out our request for strategic four-year funding and also the strategic plans.

So we know that this effort, if we are including that, must be closely coordinated with the BIA and Interior to make this happen. We still are optimistic that we can collaborate with
them to see what we can do to include that language.

DINAP is the first national program, the discretionary program, to implement a new case management system. It integrates with what we call WIPS, and I'm also pleased to report that we have started the rollout of that. And I do want to acknowledge Jennifer Whitmore, who has just been instrumental in ensuring the success of this effort. She has put all efforts forward to make sure that this works. And it involved a lot of work outside of what we call our regular duties in the Indian and Native American programs for grant administration. So thanks to Jennifer.

I also want to acknowledge that there are other members of the DINAP team who have been instrumental and have been participating in the training, including Duane Hall and Carl Duncan, who hit the ground running, and also, you know, Terry Clark, who serves as a consultant.

As you know, the system allows DINAP to meet the reporting requirements of the
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WIOA.

So why is this system so important? Because it allows grantees to submit their reports directly, and that decreases the reporting burden. During the first year, I think you all know that it's only going -- we are only going to be collecting baseline data.

Right now, we have rolled out about six session that include performance refresher training; introductory training; guidance on setting up the user accounts; the basics training, how to add clients and services; the intermediate training, how to manage client cases, alerts, outcomes, and follow up; and then the more advanced training.

We have also set up virtual office hours, so that people can get help any time. We know that with the Indian programs, you know, there is a challenge with time zones, you know, across the United States.

So I also want to let the Council know that we have recorded all of these training
sessions and posted to our workforce GPS website, along with other resources, such as creating a user manual and frequently asked questions. And we have established a help desk and a ticket system, so that we can track and troubleshoot and resolve those issues.

So all of this is a really -- to me, in my mind, it's a really big accomplishment of our program. It took a long time to get this going, but I think it's going to greatly help our program. We now know that grantees are going to be reporting on the WIOA six performance indicators and other types of things.

So, also, to let you all know that the supplemental youth program, they will continue to use the old system, the BearTracks system, until we can start on developing the case management system.

The Department has been focused heavily on rolling this first part out for DINAP, getting all of the other programs like Youth Build and the REAL program going as well. So
there has been a huge concerted effort, but I'm glad to say that DINAP has progressed well enough beyond the rollout stage.

One of the objectives also, Darrell, is to work very closely with the planning committee for the National Indian and Native American Employment and Training Conference. You know, we support the training and technical assistance initiatives, and we want to make sure that we're offering grantees the right tools and the resources, especially considering that we are -- we are still in a virtual environment.

We are slowly but surely bringing people back in, so that they are in person periodically. But we're not getting away from the virtual environment, and you know that from this meeting. So what we want to do is work closely with the planning committee to make sure that when we're moving through, developing the TAT sessions, that we know which ones are going to be virtual and which ones are going to be onsite, and focus on those.
I think there is also huge opportunities, as you heard during this meeting, across agencies, with various initiatives going on. And I hope to be able to contact some of those agencies and work closely with the planning committee, so that we can have a broad -- broad participation in the types of training that we offer to people.

I think that from what I've heard just during this meeting and others that our intergovernmental staff here in the Department has shared with me, is that there is all sorts of initiatives going on in the other agencies. And I think that it's really important that DINAP be a part of that. And I want to make sure that I share those opportunities with not only the Council members but with all of the Section 166 grantees. There is -- not only as internally with the apprenticeships and with some other initiatives that Kim will be talking about.

But also, across federal agencies, you've heard about the broadband initiatives.
Well, we have a new staff. That's really good news because we really needed that. We just hired Chelsea Fish, and Chelsea comes to us from NCAI. So she's got a really good background. And I've assigned her to work with me in heading some of these initiatives and sharing information across other federal agencies, like the broadband initiative. And she is also the point of contact with the apprenticeship office.

I don't think Chelsea is on this line right now, but I wanted to introduce her at least verbally. So I think, as we move forward, I am probably going to be in close contact with the planning committee and maybe making suggestions on some of the -- pulling in some of the other federal agency initiatives that are going on, so that our grantees can have access to those resources.

Finally, I want to remind the Council members that we are -- that I am working on the announcement of the nomination for the NAETC members. Everyone knows that their terms expire
in October of this year, so we want to get that announcement out soon because it has to go through, you know, the various departmental level clearances.

We want to share it broadly across all networks, so we can welcome anybody who is interested in participating on the Council. We also have to publish that in the Federal Register, and that whole Federal Register process, as you guys know, takes about three to five months sometimes to get it through the clearances.

And last but not least, I really want to thank Kim, Kim Vitelli, for her leadership in the Office of Workforce Investment and for also her support for this program. She helps me navigate on a daily basis, and she covers for me, she backs me up, and so she has been a great help, as well as Robin Fernkas, our Deputy Administrator. So last but not least, I want to allow Kim the opportunity to talk about some of the OWI initiatives broadly. Kim, are you on the
line?

MS. VITELLI: I am. Can you hear me okay?

MS. BROWN: Yes. Great.

MS. VITELLI: Okay. Hi, everyone.

It's really good to see you all again. And thank you, Athena, for those kind words, and also I have to -- I know you know that she's great, but I really just have to thank Athena Brown for all the work that she did putting this session together, along with Chair Waldron, and the technical support we got from folks like Suzie and Bernadette.

We wanted to make sure that we were bringing, you know, high-level voices to you, so that you knew what was happening in the administration, and so that you could share directly your opinions with folks throughout the administration. And Athena really did all of the work to invite people and think about what would be most impactful.

So, you know, Ms. Washburn mentioned
about the American Rescue Plan and that Labor
didn't get any money. I did want to sort of
clarify that. It's true that Labor did not
receive funding for workforce development. So
that is the WIOA system and a lot of our
competitive grantees, including the Indian and
Native American programs.

The Department of Labor did get
funding in the American Rescue Plan for some
other health and safety things, including health
and safety enforcement, and like wage -- I think
maybe only on the OSHA side. But also ETA got
funding for unemployment insurance.

So there was funding appropriated
under the American Rescue Plan to bolster the
infrastructure that keeps the unemployment
insurance system working, including helping
states get their UI benefits; systems, like the
IT that underpins the systems in place; and also
to give them some additional tools to root out
fraud. And, of course, the American Jobs Plan
does include a lot of proposed funding, some of
which would be formula funding and some of which
would be grant competitions.

And I know that -- I know you've heard
a lot -- a couple of people have already spoken
about the American Jobs Plan, and I know that our
Secretary will as well when he speaks. So I'm
definitely available to answer questions
tomorrow, if people have questions, but I won't
try to steal his thunder, because I think that he
might talk about the American Jobs Plan.

I did want to let you know about -- I
did want to let you know about some funding
opportunities that are either out on the street
or coming. One of those that is out on the
street right now is the work opportunity and
rural communities, which is relevant for a good
portion of you, although I know not all of you.

That funding opportunity announcement
opened in April, and we are accepting
applications until July 21st. These grants
specifically serve the Appalachian and
Mississippi Delta regions. We administer this
program, as Congress told us to, jointly with the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Delta Regional Authority.

So those geographic boundaries are sort of set in statute. But what is not set in statute, and that we try to make really, really broad, is the organizations that are eligible for funding. So tribes are certainly eligible; so are, you know, tribal nonprofits and tribal colleges and organizations of a lot of different shapes and sizes.

Unlike a lot of federal grant competitions, the minimum amount that you can apply for is really pretty low, and that's -- in this competition. And I think it's 150,000. That's much lower than like typical award size. The award sizes can go up to 1.5 million. It might be 2 million. I'll doublecheck that for you. I should have written that down.

But the grant sizes can really widely vary. We did that specifically to allow small organizations to apply. It's easier, a little
bit less rigid performance reporting than other
grant competitions. This grant competition is
specifically designed get resources to smaller
organizations that operate in rural areas.

And I'll note that energy communities
that have high concentrations of work in energy
extraction, where there is a high number of
people employed in energy extraction and related
industries, can receive bonus points, and so
where they are proposing workforce strategies
that can diversify their economies. So I
definitely wanted to raise that to your
attention, that we have 30 million. Congress
appropriated 30 million for those grants. Like I
said, the deadline is July 21st, and we'll make
awards by September 30th. Hopefully, not -- you
know, a little before September 30th.

The strengthening community we awarded
earlier this calendar year, strengthening
community colleges grants. We will also operate
another grant competition for that program. It
was appropriated again. So we'll be publishing
that in the fall, this fall of 2021, and making
awards in the spring of next year. And just last
week, we awarded YouthBuild grants, and we will
be publishing the next funding opportunity
announcement for YouthBuild in the fall for
awards by the spring.

    In about a week's time, or maybe even
this week, we will also be announcing some grants
that we had competed previously in re-entry. So
for adults who have been incarcerated and for
young people who have been just as involved or
are at risk of being just as involved, we have a
grant -- we ran a funding opportunity
announcement, and we'll be making the
announcements about those awardees. And we will
also be publishing funding opportunities for
those as well, again, in the fall for awards in
the -- for awards in the spring.

    There is two different re-entry
employment opportunities grant competitions that
we run, one aimed at adults. We've been calling
it Pathways Home. If you see the name Pathways
Home, that's the re-entry employment opportunities grant competition, and Pathways Home starts services -- or grantees start to deliver services while people are still incarcerated.

So starting the services behind the wall, helping them do their planning for when they are released, and also making sure that they have smooth transitions through that release and are able to be able to become economically stable and quickly get re-employed and providing all of the wraparound services that might be necessary to help them do that. That's Pathways Home.

And then the youth-oriented re-entry grant is called Young Adult Re-entry Partnerships. This grant competition that we just did and that we'll be awarding pretty soon was designed to deliver -- put money out to intermediaries that then sort of operate, you know, closer-to-the-ground services.

And those intermediary grants are designed to develop partnerships with community
colleges to be able to provide people with access
to higher quality -- high-quality training, more
access to high-quality training, including
working with the colleges if they need to make
adjustments in order to serve a broader range of
students.

So, you know, as you know, that's some
of the grant competition landscape. As you
know, you -- tribes can -- and Section 166
grantees can apply for dislocated worker grants,
really at any time, either to address layoffs --
there was -- you know, to address either the
economic impacts of a disaster, impacts of
COVID-19, and to respond to the opioid national
health emergency. Those are all still places
that people can apply for dislocated worker
grants.

And, you know, Suzi talked a little
bit about some of the apprenticeship
opportunities that are available. And I know
we've got that on the agenda from the -- right
from the experts tomorrow. And so I want to let
them speak to it, but also I'll just sort of suggest that folks should always keep their eyes open on grants.gov for any other grant opportunities that come around.

Let me pause there in case you've got questions for us. I also want to keep my eye -- because I know the Secretary is coming next, and so I don't want to talk over his time. I don't see him yet. But are there questions that Athena or I or anyone else -- you know, we've got the whole team on the line as well.

CHAIR WALDRON: Any questions from the Advisory Board? I'm sure there is. Maybe not.

MS. BROWN: Darrell, before --

CHAIR WALDRON: Kay, yes.

MS. BROWN: Oh, go ahead.

MEMBER SEVEN: So I'm wondering about the funding formula. I think we all know that we've been using Census numbers since 2000. Things have changed since the American Community Survey. What is the Department of Labor's solution for addressing funding formula?
MS. BROWN: We have been working closely with Census, but we haven't moved forward to obtain any numbers from them. But it's something that Duane Hall has been working closely with the Indian programs at Census. I don't have any updates from the time that we -- you know, the pandemic started to now, everything sort of came to a standstill. So, Kay, it's something that we'll continue to work on.

MEMBER SEVEN: I mean, it would be good for us to know if that is a topic that the Effective Management Workgroup should keep abreast of for at least the next two years, because back in the old days, by 2004, you know, we were able to request data sets, specific data sets from the Census Bureau. But I don't know if that's an option this time, whether it's the -- I'm not too sure when it's going to be.

And, you know, are we going to be implementing a new formula that will have an impact where Department of Labor is having to announce a hold harmless, effective like 2026.
So I've been waiting for that to happen for 20 years now, almost 20 years. And will there be anything new that will change our numbers from 2000?

MS. BROWN: Well, it's something definitely that we'll work with the Effective Management Workgroup, because, as you know, when we do get those numbers, it does have an impact on some of the grantees across the board. And it's really important to think about a hold harmless formula. So Duane is on the line. I believe he is on this call. Duane, can you give us a short update of where we are with that, in working with the Census?

MR. HALL: Yeah, sure. We entered into a memorandum of agreement with Census a little over a year ago to get the Census numbers for unemployed -- for low income and unemployed Native Americans throughout the United States. And we just got back about a month ago data for all -- for all 50 states, except for Oklahoma and Alaska. We kind of set Oklahoma and
Alaska aside because, as many of you know, Oklahoma has what's called Oklahoma tribal statistical areas, and we also do that formula a little different in Oklahoma, that it's based on -- based on tribal members.

So we have all of the data for the 48 states. I'd be happy to at some point share that with the Council. You know, as you all know, there is going to be people who gain funding when we -- if -- when and if we switch to this, yeah, we're going to have people who gain funding and people who lose funding.

And as I think Norman DeWeaver and I have always said, you know, we've got to be careful what we wish for. Once you see the numbers, you know, if you gain funding, you're going to like it. If you lose funding, you're probably not so happy with it.

But, Kay, I definitely -- I think we would probably have to have a -- some kind of gradual increase and decrease of grantees' funding. They refer to that as a hold harmless,
as you pointed out, because we want to gradually
get people to their numbers.

But we're still waiting from -- for
Census to give us the data for Oklahoma and the
data for Alaska. Those -- Oklahoma especially is
very tricky, because you have to get tribal --
numbers on tribal people who indicate their
tribal affiliation, whereas the other 48 states
it's just people in the American community survey
who say they're American Indian or some other
combination, whereas in Oklahoma we need that
information, plus we need to know what tribe they
identify with. There is a special agreement with
Oklahoma on how we do those numbers.

So that takes a while to get. We are
waiting on that, but we do have the numbers for
the other 48 states.

MS. BROWN: Thanks, Duane. Darrell?
Darrell?

CHAIR WALDRON: Sorry, I was -- yes?

MS. BROWN: Before I finish today, I
just want to say that most of the Council
probably heard about the passing of our esteemed
colleague Terry Parks. I just want to
acknowledge that, and also to say that Terry has
been a really big advocate for Indian programs
and for the Indian Self-Determination Act. And
so I just want to acknowledge that today. I also
want to let the Council members know that our
other esteemed colleague from Region 4, Tina
Farrenkopf, has resigned from the Council due to
a family emergency. But we very much appreciate
her work with this Council.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you very much.
Terry will definitely be missed. I had a lot of
good opportunities with him to have some fun and
some discussion. It's sad when that happens, and
our Indian programs, when someone passes (audio
interference).

So we are right on time with our
agenda. It is 3:30. So it's hard for me to tell
from where I'm at if our next speaker is
available, so I'm going to go ahead and do the
introduction, assuming that he is there.
MS. VITELLI: Darrell, this is Kim. The Secretary isn't here just yet but is expected to be here in just a minute or two. And -- but he is on his way.

CHAIR WALDRON: Great. Thank you. Because I can't tell that from here, and so I just will be saying it. So just as we've got a moment here, I've got a couple of chat questions about some time in the agenda, more than likely we can talk about it at recap or at a point tomorrow, about discussions in the community amongst the Council.

I've gotten a couple of notes sent to me from Council members while we were on the call. So I just want to put that out there, if we can kind of move something around to get some conversation going with our Advisory Council members about the community.

So maybe in the recap area we can get something with that started. And then we want to talk about the document for urgency, and transition that that we had drafted to it. And
that's going to be for tomorrow, if you can just
keep that in mind. I don't want to get into it
now, because maybe -- he will probably show up
right as we're starting. So -- go ahead.

MS. BROWN: A quick update. Also, I
missed, unfortunately, the 477 Federal Partners
meeting today, and I understand the workgroup is
also meeting tomorrow. But I have -- Duane has
been assigned to cover that, but I just want to
let everybody know that we currently have
59 grants that we sent over to Department of the
Interior. So that we may end up with a few more
this year. I know that several have applied for
the program and are pending approval.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you. Patty, did
you have a question?

MEMBER HIBBELER: I did. I have a
question for Duane actually. So having received
the -- I'll hold that because the Secretary is
joining.

CHAIR WALDRON: Okay. Great.

MEMBER HIBBELER: Thank you, Darrell.
CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you. So ready for an opportunity today. We are excited that we have the Secretary with us. I am honored -- truly honored -- because he is from my area. So he will understand my accent today. I know a lot of you guys don't. I am honored to introduce the Honorable Martin J. Walsh, the 29th Secretary of Labor. Mr. Walsh is the former mayor of Boston. Mr. Walsh, we are pleased that you agreed to join us today and look forward to a great dialogue and ongoing relationship with you.

This Council reports directly to you. We are your Council. I know you'd like to get right into the remarks, so I don't want to waste any more time on an introduction. Sir, you have the floor.

SECRETARY WALSH: I'm unmuted, right?

CHAIR WALDRON: We can hear you.

SECRETARY WALSH: Okay. Sorry. We should know all of this this by now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understood everything you said. It is great to be on the call with you and
everybody. I just want to just say, you know, federally recognized tribes have a unique and longstanding relationship with the federal government, and I certainly intend to support that relationship and to make it stronger. And I want to be able to do the best we can.

I want the members of this Council and the tribal programs to know that the work that you have done to support and protect your communities during the pandemic, I am truly grateful for it. COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted Native communities and that is no secret.

I know some of you have taken steps. Some of the steps you have taken, I should say, have impacted your employment and training programs. A top priority of the Biden-Harris Administration is to increase equity and inclusion. We must make sure that everyone has access to opportunity as we continue to move forward here, especially those who have been shut out and mistreated in the past.
I spent the last year as mayor -- well, the last seven years as mayor, but the last year in particular with COVID, it has been a really difficult year for everybody. And it was -- it is certainly something that we -- none of us have ever experienced. And I know certainly that includes Native American communities as well, the challenges that people face. We want to make sure that you can continue to help your clients get high-quality, good-paying jobs, remove whatever barriers stand in the way.

I also know that -- and I'm learning, I should say, really honestly -- many Native communities face challenges, including access to transportation, limited jobs, geographic isolation, lack of broadband, and, quite honestly, a lot of what is in the American Jobs Plan that is important. I know that we need to continue to work together to make sure we come up with solutions and strategies to address the challenges.

The American Jobs Plan includes some
resources that would address many of the underlying infrastructure issues that hold back economic growth -- in the Jobs Plan -- transportation, infrastructure, broadband access, clean drinking water, climate, and clean energy, just to name a couple.

Each area of investment also would prioritize communities in the most in need through the partnership with state, local, and tribal governments. And that is going to be key. The President has been very clear on making sure that these investments get down to the local level. The American Jobs Plan also invests heavily in workforce development, with a strong equity focus. And the community college trading partnership -- and I met with community colleges yesterday; they are very excited about this -- would invest $9 billion over the next 10 years.

Grant recipients would include tribal colleges, and the proposal also reserves a portion of funding for underserved communities. You know, this plan proposes investments in
apprenticeships, in job training, sector partnership grants, and subsidized jobs. And our administration and the Department of Labor, our Office of Apprenticeships, John Ladd is speaking to you tomorrow about apprenticeships, and we had a meeting on that today, really talking about making sure that these apprenticeships make a difference. We have to make a difference in people's lives.

I think it's important to ask for your advice on how to ensure that Native businesses can sponsor apprenticeships, and Native American workers can access apprenticeship programs. And I also understand that the Native American community has concerns about efforts by the previous administration to eliminate funding to the WIOA Indian and Native American programs.

I had a hearing the other day for WIOA specifically. The Biden-Harris Administration is certainly committed to the program. In fiscal year '22, FY22, the budget proposes an increase of $58 million in funding.
And I want to hear from the Council about how we can best move forward in supporting this program as well. So it's not just about getting investments. It's about, how do we help you support the programs?

We are also committed to the Indian employment training and relative service consolidation program. It's called the 477 program. It allows tribes to determine the best way to operate their programs and align multiple federal resources in a way that works best for all of them.

As you know, the 477 program is administered by the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and I am pleased that my colleague from the Department of Interior has been invited to share remarks. DOL also has a longstanding relationship with the Department of Interior supporting this program, and we are only going to continue to build that relationship as we move forward.

Congress is also looking at
reauthorizing the Workforce Innovation and
Opportunity Act. As I mentioned, I testified at
the House education and labor hearing about what
my priorities are, and what I would like to see
in the bill, and what we want to see included is
key aspects of the American Jobs Plan, including
both investments and innovations.

The workforce system is severely,
badly underfunded, including the Indian and
Native American programs. As a former mayor and
a former legislator, I can speak to that
directly. A lot of that funding we made up by
putting city funds into those programs, and then
we talk about equality and really closing gaps
and creating opportunities for people to earn
more and to be able to better raise their family.
This is the time to do it.

We also -- the President wants to
expand training for people -- quality training,
not just training, quality people -- quality
training so people can get quality jobs. We want
to invest in programs for young people, and we
also want to see equity in our performance measures, something that I think is really, really important as we move forward.

So as I wrap up here, what I want to do is just say to everyone, I welcome your feedback. I welcome how we can operate these programs differently at Department of Labor. I look forward to answering any questions you have, but I also look forward to just having a strong -- I'm sorry, my video went off -- a strong relationship with everyone on this call. I apologize, I didn't realize my video was off -- with the call, and I'm learning.

You know, I'm learning as we go on here. It's about my 90th day almost here at the Department of Labor. I certainly know a lot more than day two, but I certainly don't know everything. So with that, I will turn it back to you, Darrell.

CHAIR WALDRON: Great. Thank you. Are there any questions for -- I'm sure there are -- questions from the Advisory Council?
SECRETARY WALSH: We have a shy Council.

CHAIR WALDRON: Well, they're not shy when you're not around. So the Chair recognizes Joe and Kay.

MR. QUINTANA: Thank you, Secretary Walsh, for joining us today. Joseph Quintana, Region 6. Hope that you and your family are well, especially as we come through the pandemic and work towards the recovery process.

Appreciate the words that you're sharing today and appreciate the candid nature that you're sharing it. Of course, working in communication and building relationships takes time. And we understand that you're just starting out, and we look forward to supporting your initiatives going forward, and vice versa, that you support us as well, especially as we seek to serve in underserved communities such as the American Indian and Alaska Native population, both living in reservation communities, rural communities, and large urban centers.
I happen to live in a large urban center, and so I am going to speak to the issues in regards to people out in Southern California and out West. But I enjoy the conversation about getting our people back to work, looking at ways that we can be a part of the recovery process, and not just getting them a job but getting them a job for its long-term economic stability.

We want to make sure that our community members have access to upward mobility, so that they can enter a middle class market, something that has only been a dream for a large majority of our population. Over 90 percent of our members fall below the federal poverty line out in the community that I serve.

I think one possible aspect to this is we get people get back to work and into high-profile positions or high-level jobs, is to also -- is to also work towards business development and making sure that our members have access to hiring their own employees. I think that's a way that we can also break cycles of poverty, which a
large, vast majority of our population has continued to remain in.

I think also looking at investment within programs like 166 program will be important for long-term success. And I think that if there is an opportunity to do so, the time is now, especially with the administration that we have in place. There is a great deal of communication that is taking place, and we appreciate at least hearing our voices, and we hope that we'll be a part of the long-term success within your administration as well. So thank you again for joining us today.

SECRETARY WALSH: Thank you very much, and thank you for your comments, and thank you for what you just said. And I look forward to working with you, absolutely.

CHAIR WALDRON: The Chair recognizes Kay Seven.

MEMBER SEVEN: Hello. Good afternoon, Secretary Walsh. My name is Kay Seven. I work with the Nez Perce Tribe located out here in
Idaho, and I just wanted to welcome you to this new job. I look forward -- we look forward to working with the new administration within the Department building.

You know, in the last administration, I became very fond of a senior official in the ETA. His name was John Pallasch. And so I'll tell you a little story about him. I eventually started telling other tribes that there's this really cool guy in the Department of Labor building who I think was an Indian at one point in his -- in his lifetime. Because the way he talked about federal programs in his state of Arkansas, that, you know, he truly believed the concept of Public Law 102-477 to blend, BREP, integrate, federal programs that are related to each other.

And he had a vision for how ETA could move forward with embracing and supporting how tribes use that legislative authority to address the needs in our community.

The Department of Interior has a great
opportunity in this new administration to do the same. But I look to the Department of Labor of being that partner that you've been for decades in supporting this legislation to help us reach out to the other federal partners to bring them on board with this, what John Pallasch called the one workforce.

And, you know, when Tom Perez introduced the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, I'll never forget the webinar I listened to, where he was saying that Congress wanted to address this nation's workforce. And we need to do this by BREP, addressing, doing silo busting, doing silo implosion. We need to address the fragmentation of services at the federal level.

And so that's what tribes have done with this 477 legislation, and so we look forward to our federal partners looking at, how is it that we can break down this fragmentation of services at our level to address the needs of the tribal nations? So, again, I look forward to
working with the Department of Labor. This
Department has done good work on our behalf. We
just this time ask to make sure you maintain our
section of law in the reauthorization of the
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Thank
you.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you, Kay.

SECRETARY WALSH: Thank you, Kay.

CHAIR WALDRON: Do you have any
questions? I see Erwin Pahmahmie, but did you
want to respond, Secretary?

SECRETARY WALSH: No, I just said
thank you. No, I said thank you. And, again, I
mean, a lot of these programs for me are new, and
I'm learning them, and I appreciate -- appreciate
you giving some insight in the past here in the
Department. And, obviously, any information,
anything that you think I should know, I'd love
to get the information.

CHAIR WALDRON: So the Chair
recognizes Erwin Pahmahmie, and then Patty.

MEMBER PAHMAHMIE: Good afternoon.
Erwin Pahmahmie, Region 4. Thank you for meeting with us today, Secretary Walsh.

In conversations with your colleagues and stuff that met with us previous, you know, it seems like we're kind of continuing the resonating or echoing of the same things over and over again. But at the same time, you know, it's very important that we bring these issues up, including administration, you know, regarding the increase for funding and stuff for our programs as well as increase for the administration, too.

The Division of Indian and Native American Programs, you know, hasn't received any funding increase for quite some time. I know they recently just hired someone new within the last two years, but at the same time, you know, there's lots of work to be done, at least on the technical assistance side I feel.

You know, this one percent that goes, you know, from the money and stuff, you know, we would like to see that also more adequately reported to us. At this time, I'm not certain
how -- when the last time we received a report, but it would be nice to see that, you know, just on our side, you know, so that way when people do ask how we are working with -- you know, with the federal government, we can say, well, they spent this much on helping us in these areas that we need.

Another thing, too, is -- yeah, apprenticeships. Yeah. You know, I'm really excited about it. I shared with Ms. LeVine earlier that, you know, we have worked, you know, in engaging, you know, apprenticeships here. A Department of Labor representative came and visited us a few years ago. I work with the Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes in Oklahoma here. That lady, she oversees Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas, and she was providing technical assistance. And I only heard from her once, you know, on a follow up, but she did come to visit us, and, you know, talked to us about how to, you know, prepare and get things set up.

But again, you know, we need guidance
on how to make these programs successful. But at the same time, too, you know, we're very apt to want to learn. We're very apt to, you know, explore new options and -- you know, and these are proven methods of us to be, you know, getting in areas that, you know, aren't traditionally apprenticeships, so, you know, like -- such as hospitality.

The new threat right now is the -- what is it, the -- cybersecurity and stuff. You know, those are areas we want to explore, and hopefully, you know, the administration will support these thoughts and we can move forward together. Thank you. Edwin Pahmahmie, Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes, Region 4 representative. Thank you.

SECRETARY WALSH: Thank you very much, Erwin. Let me just say this. I think that we are looking at on-the-job training, looking at different industries, and I think that we're going to be talking about -- any ideas you have, you should get them in, because when we talk
about preparing the workforce, you know, the same old industries are different.

They're changing and evolving. And I think it's important that we think about how we target workforce development programs, even in certain parts of the country, differently than maybe in other parts of the country.

So, for example, like in Boston, I think about like biotech, life sciences, creating opportunities for jobs in those spaces for high schoolers, kids graduating that might not go on to college or partnering through a community college. In other parts of the country, there is other industry that's coming in there.

I think that -- so I would love to -- not love to -- I wouldn't -- not that I would love to. We need to think about these other industries, and I would love to get some ideas on what you are talking -- what you're thinking in areas around the country that could be beneficial in different types of jobs.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you. The Chair
recognizes Patty Hibbeler.

MEMBER HIBBELER: Thank you, Chair.

My name is Patty Hibbeler. I am representing Region 6. I am CEO here at the Phoenix Indian Center in Phoenix, Arizona.

So I want to thank you, Secretary, for joining us today and for your comments.

I also want to say, Kay, my comment was very similar to what you were going to -- what you made. So I think we had a mind meld this morning, really thinking about how we address and work with our clients holistically, which really looks at bringing in funding from many of the different federal agencies, which many of us in our tribes or even in our urban-based programs are providing those holistic services which many of us call the social determinants of health.

So appreciate that that is still your initiative, Secretary, to move forward and work across silos within the federal department to make that process much more streamlined and
easier for the grantees that will be accessing those funds or applying. So we think that's very important.

I also want to say I am really excited about -- for our conversation tomorrow around apprenticeships. Here at the Phoenix Indian Center we have been very active in moving forward career pathways. And one that has been very successful for us recently has been our work with two local truck driving certification institutions here in the greater Phoenix area, having trained well over 100 different clients right now that are successfully filling that need and that gap that's out there for long haul truck drivers.

We have one woman that we put through school there. She met her husband while she was in truck driving school. They got married, started working, made some great money, bought their own truck, and now they are doing long-haul trucking, making about $12,000 a month. So that's really a great success for
a woman who was once homeless when she came to us in her services. So we appreciate our ability to be able to administer these types of programs and think creatively to help our American Indian population get successfully into jobs that will be good wage-earning positions moving forward.

So I just wanted to share that story with you.

SECRETARY WALSH: Thank you. Thanks, Patricia.

CHAIR WALDRON: Is that better? Can you hear me now?

Okay. So Chris -- the Chair recognizes Chris, Chris Campbell. Sorry, Chris, I think you're muted.

MEMBER CAMPBELL: I've been quiet all day. It's an honor to meet you, Secretary Walsh, and it's not often that we get to meet with the new Secretary right off the bat. So I think this is a great opportunity for that.

And I represent Region 5. Most of our area that I represent here locally in the Kansas
City, Missouri, area is urban area. So I've been hit this last week with a lot of REAL programs that are ran by the state. They are busy renewing their MOUs, and I just want to strengthen that somehow.

I mean, we have been working on it for years where the state WIOA programs are I'm going to say mandated to work with Indian programs, but there is always a disconnect there, and I think the disconnect is that they don't understand we're a supplemental program, that we're not funded at the level that they are.

So I would like to see the state WIOA programs reach out more to Indian programs, and also, more importantly, that they provide services to our communities, because they are already funded to provide services to our communities.

And each and every time one of the state WIOA programs that we work with, we have to educate their new directors constantly that when an Indian person walks in the door that they have
already been funded to provide services to them
and we're the supplemental end of that.

So I think somehow we need to continue
to work on strengthening that effort. So just
basically want to reach out to those guys and
make them understand that, yes, there are Indian
programs, but we are supposed to serve those
clients as well.

SECRETARY WALSH: All right. Thank
you. I want to learn more about that, the
funding piece of that.

MEMBER CAMPBELL: Okay. Well, we're
funded at a very lower level. States are
receiving funding off the Indian population that
reside in their service area. So what -- and I
have four offices that I house staff in workforce
-- workforce centers, urban workforce centers,
one rule.

And they are always reluctant to
provide services to our clients, because we're
there. And, you know, we want to share costs to
not do complete services but share costs with the
state workforce centers. And they don't want to spend funding on our clients because we're there.

So there's a misunderstanding that Indian programs have a lot of money and -- to provide services to the Indian population, which it's not true. We're supplemental, meaning that we don't -- we're not able to provide all of the employment and training services that the state programs do.

So I would like to see more focus on Indian populations that have -- that are -- how am I saying this? I'm probably going to mix you up. In areas where there is Indian population that are accessing the WIOA programs ran by the state, that those state WIOA programs provide services to those Indian clients, along with us, and work better with us to provide those services.

MS. LEVINE: Mr. Secretary, if I can complement that, Chris, you're spot on. And at the state level, unfortunately, in too many places they assume, oh, Indian country has got it
covered. They've got their own funding sources.

And where there is integration, where there is collaboration, where there is a focus in that space, it is individuals making those decisions, or individuals recognizing in certain areas where there is just such an overwhelming population that, of course, they are going to do that work. But it is not systemic, and I think that there is a lot of opportunity there for expanding that collaboration and integration and really thinking about the whole person and integration services.

So I think you're spot on, Chris.

There's more opportunity there.

MEMBER CAMPBELL: Thank you, Suzi. It has just been an ongoing process, and I know in some areas throughout the United States the workforce centers don't work with tribes very well. They don't work with urban Indian organizations.

We have been fortunate. I have -- like I said, they're all hitting me up for MOUs,
and of course I'm going to sign them and work with them, but it's always bittersweet. You want the signature, but you don't do anything for Indian clients.

Thank you for your time.

SECRETARY WALSH: Thank you.

CHAIR WALDRON: So I'd like to echo that and give you just maybe a little bit of -- some data. So about 80 percent of our grantees nationwide are under $100,000 a year, and they are serving a population. And most of the state Department of Labor training programs do not work well with the Indian community.

In 1979, our funding was over 200 million. It was 229 million. We've been reduced now to 55 million. We operated under the law for funding for several years until we got to 55, and we need a lot more. We are so used to stretching our dollars and serving our community that in most cases -- and Athena can correct me if I'm wrong -- the national wage for Indians in our programs is $26,000 a year.
They are the poorest of any other ethnic group in this country, and every year we have to educate and fight for funding. We did ask for a large increase. We do have a transition paper sent to you, and an urgency document, but we really need your help to just level the playing field, not to give us a hand out but a hand up, so that we can get our talented people and get good training, access to training above $3,500 a client. That's about what we're funded for.

And we work around the clock for our communities, but it is difficult. And, you know, I -- my dad died when I was in high school, and I went to work for the Teamsters Union, and I was able to put money in my house with a decent wage. So I am so happy that you guys are here and we're talking about apprenticeship, because it instantly puts people into the middle class sector.

So we're asking for your help because a lot of times we put words forward on paper and
we don't get access to from the Secretary. So
we're asking you to help us get help out to our
community.

The number one cause of death in our
communities are suicide.

So I'm -- I just wanted to give those
facts to you, sir.

Any other questions from the Advisory
Board? Any comments for the Secretary? Any
other questions?

MEMBER RICKARD: This is Gary Rickard.

CHAIR WALDRON: The Chair recognizes
Gary Rickard.

MEMBER RICKARD: I would like to thank
Secretary Walsh for taking this time to come meet
with us. You don't realize just how excited we
are to have the Secretary take time out of his
busy schedule to do this.

We make recommendations to the
Secretary of Labor, and we hope in the near
future to send you a White Paper on the
recommendations that we would like to see happen
under this administration.

Once again, your appearing here shows
us that you have an interest in our program and
the Native people, and we thank you very much for
that.

SECRETARY WALSH: Gary, thank you for
your -- thank you for those words. I appreciate
it, and I, too, have an interest, and I want to
continue to work closely with the different
regions all throughout the country, and actually
more than just meeting and talking, doing actual
-- I want to do some visits and things like that.
So thank you, Gary.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you, Secretary.
We know your time is short, and you were
scheduled with us until 4:00. So if you don't
have any last very quick comments, we really
appreciate you coming today. I know we have
another meeting lined up with you, but I really
do appreciate you being here on behalf of this
Council and the comments from my Council members.

Thank you.
SECRETARY WALSH: No. I appreciate it. And there's always a blessing in disguise. It's a blessing because we can all get together and not have to travel all over the country, and it's terrible because literally there is no 15 minutes between meetings. It's like 4:00 to 4:30, 4:30 to 5:00, 5:00 to 5:30, 5:30 to 6:00, and like -- so it's very efficient I guess for doing business. I don't know if it is or not. I kind of liked the old way where I rambled over 15 minutes, and I was late all day, but at least I -- the face time was good.

No. I want to say thank you all. Thank you for the work you've done. I'm certainly committed to the mission, and we're going to continue to move forward with this.

Thank you for everything.

CHAIR WALDRON: Awesome. Thank you.

We'll be in touch.

SECRETARY WALSH: All right. Bye-bye.

CHAIR WALDRON: I'm sorry, Kim. I'm getting a little chat box over here. I don't
know who sent it. It might have been his
scheduler.

So the next part of this agenda here
is a recap of today and the possibility of some
discussion around this urgency document,
statement of need that we sent. So I just want
to clarify what happened with this.

So when the administration switched
over and they started appointing the secretaries,
we had gotten together, me and Jacob and Lorinda,
to talk about a transition statement that we had
all worked on for years and had sent out on some
occasions.

And we wanted to put it together and
get it out on behalf of this Council. But under
the FACA rules, we had not had the opportunity to
discuss that because of COVID, and call a
meeting. And so we did put the document out, and
we put it under the planning conference. We were
able to get NCAI on board, 477, and of course our
Executive Council.

And it was the work that we had worked
on over the years, and asking for our program -- responding to the powerful statement made by the Trump Administration that we were untested, unproven, old and antiquated, and he expected our budget to be zero.

So we sent that and kind of pushed it back and forth trying to get their attention, and we finally did. We got their attention, and we have a meeting -- myself, Jacob, and Lorinda -- next Friday, the 24th, with Secretary Walsh.

And so I sent this document over. So this is sort of a done deal at this point, but we have scheduled a meeting. So I sent the document over yesterday to you in hopes to get a vote from this Council of acceptance and support for this document that went forth, and then maybe we wanted to either endorse the whole document or get the urgency and statement of need, and then put our own one-page letter to it.

That's why I sent you the one-page letter. I mean, I sent you the letter that I wrote with Margaret separately. I didn't want to
confuse the two. But this is a done deal at this point. It has been going on since -- what did you say there, Jacob? Early April, going back and forth in between the White House, NCAI, with us, with 477, and what was allowable and what was not allowable.

So that's what this was sent to you -- at least scheduled, and I just want to reiterate a couple of things at the end of our phone call. So we can either do it now, you guys can think about it. We can make time for it tomorrow, or you don't have to support it. I would like you to -- whether we write another letter or just endorse this one, which we have and the staff has it, and it is all of the good stuff that we would have done tomorrow.

I guess it probably spans a few years, but it's stuff from Lorinda, stuff from this committee, stuff from us, stuff from NCAI, and stuff from 477.

Any discussion? The Chair recognizes Kim.
MEMBER CARROLL: Thank you, Chair.

Yeah. I've looked through this transition paper, and this is all issues that the Advisory Council has discussed numerous times and come to an agreement on.

Some of the wording is a little bit different. You know, I noticed it said 110 million rather than 100 million, things like that. But I think at least the concepts contained in here are things that we have all agreed on at one point or another.

I would hope that we could take some action tomorrow to try to move this forward, and I would certainly -- I don't if I need to make that in the form of a motion, that we sort of consider this tomorrow?

CHAIR WALDRON: We can make it a motion, and then we can formally address it tomorrow for a vote up or a vote down. Yes. So are you making that a motion?

MEMBER CARROLL: I will, yes.

CHAIR WALDRON: Kim is making a
motion. Is there a second on the motion?

MEMBER CHAISSON: I'll second. This is Lora Ann Chaisson.

CHAIR WALDRON: It has been seconded by Lora Ann. Any discussion?

MEMBER SEVEN: Yes.

CHAIR WALDRON: Kay?

MEMBER SEVEN: So I'm glad that Kim has, you know, read it thoroughly, and she said it's something that has been supported all along. But I guess my question comes to the meeting set up with Secretary Walsh.

So I go back to the old days when we used to see ourselves as two different groups. We're either a standalone WIOA Section 166 program or we're a 477 program. And so in this meeting with Secretary Walsh, who is our representative for representing the 477 tribal workgroup?

Because I hear Lorinda, Jacob, and yourself, I know that you're -- what we know is, you know, in WIOA programs, but I think there
needs to be a representative of -- a 477 member.
And then, also, are we talking about the letter
that has the NCAI logo in the middle?

CHAIR WALDRON: So, yeah, let me give you a little clarity. So the first two pages here are just a letter, and we can do a separate letter from the Advisory Board. This is actually the statement of urgency, which is titled Transition Document, Statement of Urgency and Opportunity.

MEMBER SEVEN: I see NCAI on the letterhead, too. So in this call to Secretary Walsh, is there an invited member of NCAI, like Ian Record, to join this call?

CHAIR WALDRON: There is not at this time -- Ian was involved with this. We are still going through the process for that meeting. We were unable to do it from the Advisory Board, which is our first intention.

But we were not in a meeting between the time that we sent this and the time we had last met. And so we have informed on the fact
that we would be violating the rules. And so we
sent it under our (audio interference).

That's how it came about, but it is a
document -- most of the document came out of the
Advisory Board for the past couple
administrations, and new developments and
opportunities that we have seen.

Interestingly, we responded after the
budget went out already. So we were trying to
get access to the federal program, a budget
increase, before they met and had this meeting
recommending the budget that they gave to us.

So I don't know where the increase is
going to go now. We'll find out.

MEMBER SEVEN: So, Kim, what was your
motion again?

MEMBER CARROLL: My motion is that we
consider the transition paper that was sent to us
yesterday, considering that most of the
information in here was agreed to by the Advisory
Council in the past.

MEMBER SEVEN: So is that to support
the -- to support the letter as a Council only, but we're not going to have our own letter on Council letterhead?

MEMBER CARROLL: No, no, no, no. No, absolutely not. I'm talking about the transition paper, not the letter. We won't have to do our own letter. But basically what I'm talking about is considering the items that are listed in this transition paper for our White Paper to the Secretary. Does that make sense? Does that --

MEMBER SEVEN: Yes. It helps clarify.

MEMBER CARROLL: Okay. Good.

CHAIR WALDRON: So Joe has a question, and I think following the discussion, Kay.

MR. QUINTANA: Hi. Joseph, Joseph Quintana, Region 6. Just to follow up on what Kay is mentioning, are we accepting the document as-is without any other revision? That's one question.

The other question is: should it not just be our letterhead at the top? Nothing to go against what NCIA is providing in their support
or the 477 program itself, but it's coming from
this particular body in general, so I'm just
suggesting that. Otherwise, the document looks
fine. I'm just wondering if we're accepting it
as-is.

CHAIR WALDRON: So part of our
problem, Joe, is we actually wanted it to come
just from the Advisory Board. But we missed the
opportunity because of COVID, things that
happened and we did not meet, and we actually did
draft it on the letterhead of the Advisory Board,
and they are just going run it, let everybody get
a copy of it through email.

But we were informed that it's a
violation of FACA rules because we did not have a
meeting and pass a resolution which was adopted.
So we were told that in the middle of working on
it, so then we decided to do it from the
next-best thing that we had, which was the
executive planning committee.

And it did go forward. It has been
going back and forth quite a bit. We were trying
to get it in before the end of March, because
that's when they begin to make their decisions.
That did not happen. It was pushed around, and
we finally did get access, but it was after the
appropriations.

So we are hoping if they're going to
do an increase to the program, that it would
benefit us all maybe in 2022 or if he has some
discretion funds. But we would have preferred to
do it from the Advisory Board because it's a much
stronger and more powerful body.

So what we're asking here for is
support from the Advisory Board that we -- we
could mention that it has been supported by this
Advisory Board and we have all parties inclusive.

And then I think that would be
probably a discussion with them and then a more
formal meeting where we will probably come
together, which it was kind of alluded to us
getting together.

So that's sort of where we were.

We're rolling the dice on it because we did not
send it.

MEMBER SEVEN: So when you speak to Secretary Walsh, you're speaking not as a member of the Advisory Council, but you're speaking as a member of an executive committee of the --

CHAIR WALDRON: Yes.

MEMBER SEVEN: -- for the conference?

(Simultaneous speaking.)

CHAIR WALDRON: Yes. Planning committee for the conference. We would have preferred the Advisory Board, but we couldn't do it. Now -- we can support it now, and it would be in addition to the other support that we have. But this went in under our executive committee.

MEMBER SEVEN: I think I would like to see the -- to make sure that there is a 477 grantee participating in this call. How about we have that representation on the planning committee?

CHAIR WALDRON: Okay. So Margaret can be part of that. Margaret's signature is on the letter here, which was opening up the statement
at the end. But it is not the transition
document that is here.

MEMBER SEVEN: Okay. Well, that would
be good. Again, I'd like to make sure that a 477
tribe -- I know that Erwin, Margaret, and also
Penny are on the executive committee of that
planning committee. So that's how I see it.
This is the planning committee, executive
committee, sending this letter in, in partnership
with NCAI. We're supporting that.

CHAIR WALDRON: Again, we hope to be
in partnership with the Advisory Board. So the
whole executive committee supported the document
and voted on it and we sent it forward. So we're
hoping to get the support here.

So Kim's motion is to formally discuss
it tomorrow, take a look at it. Am I correct,
Kim, about tomorrow, or are you wanting to get it
approved now?

MEMBER CARROLL: If I may?

CHAIR WALDRON: Yes.

MEMBER CARROLL: Yes, tomorrow. And
I have no problem if there are some things that we want to add or even changes that we wanted to make to make it our own, absolutely, I think that we should send in our own White Paper.

But this is what we've been working on. I mean, this is -- this is it. And, you know, every year there is -- there are some minor changes, and that's what I'm talking about. There are some wording differences on this, but this was our paper. This was the Advisory Council's paper to begin with.

And so that's why I said I'd like to consider this, if we can formally look at it, and determine if we still agree with the issues that we had agreed upon, what, two, three, four years ago now?

Yeah. That's where I was going with this.

CHAIR WALDRON: It has been a while, and the last one we did we never got an official response on. For one of them we did, that there would be other considerations, but then that kind
of ended it, stalled it.

So, you know, I advocated for a much more aggressive letter, a lot more shorter, just because I wanted to get it up on the table. But it was -- it was a lot of work getting it in to him and getting everybody on board.

And so the meeting is, like I said, unfortunately, it is -- it is with the planning committee, which is not as strong as this committee. But you guys can add a letter to it and make other statements in it, and we can, you know, attach it, just include it in the conversation that we're going to have, we could do that.

This document is -- the meeting has been scheduled. But it is our work from multiple years. What we did miss in it, which I'm upset about because for two years we've been discussing reauthorization, and we haven't done anything about reauthorization.

And listening yesterday to one of the conversations was we may not get any of the
increases because we are not authorized, and that
the Senate may not vote to do an increase because
we're not authorized. But, you know, the
conversation was they felt we would get it.

But that's at 500,000 now, and
3 million for next year. This would advocate for
next year at this point I guess.

MEMBER SEVEN: Well, tomorrow Pamela
--- actually, the action step will happen
tomorrow. But in the meantime, we'll just take a
look at things, right?

CHAIR WALDRON: Right. So tonight you
read it, kind of go through it, and see if you
want to go with this or support this and add
something else to it that we can try to get into
them. But the meeting now is to get it formally
on for tomorrow for a vote. That's what her
motion was. It was not to approve it right this
minute.

MEMBER SEVEN: And I would like to
know from Wayne Gordon how many tribes maybe made
similar comments on their comments on their --
comments on the Department of Labor's request for tribal consultation, because I know we, as a tribe, included these type comments on our letter as a tribal nation.

CHAIR WALDRON: Yeah. I have listened to some of the stuff. It is very powerful. I think one of the issues is we never got answers. And as you all know, the Trump Administration zeroed out our budgets, and they stayed zeroed out even after he was gone. And that's where our future was.

So, but we wanted to get this out a lot earlier, Kay, and had a lot more authority behind it. But it was just didn't come -- this was the best that we could come up with. I don't know if Jacob wants to speak to any of it or not, but this is where we are.

This meeting is scheduled, and as far as I know it's still going to happen. But, you know, we're not there yet, but we have it scheduled for the fall. I thought it was interesting that he said he wants to get back
with us again via Zoom today.

   So is there a second on Kim's motion
that was made and seconded? We had discussion.

Any further discussion?

MEMBER SEVEN: I'll second. This is
Kay.

CHAIR WALDRON: Kay is seconding it,
with Lora Ann. All those in favor, signify by
saying aye.

   (Chorus of aye.)

MEMBER SEVEN: Opposed? Oppositions?

Passes unanimously. We'll put it on the agenda
for a vote tomorrow.

   The question at hand is whether you
want to have your own letter, you know, added to
it, or comments. Or you can support the document
in the way that it is done. That's what we will
be discussing tomorrow.

   Do you follow what I'm saying? Or you
can make a whole other page and do a separate
request, but we would have to wait to get that
in.
MEMBER SEVEN: I would recommend we just, you know, look -- support the letter, but I really think our Effective Management Workgroup probably should meet right away and decide on the strategic next step as a follow up to this support.

CHAIR WALDRON: I'm glad you brought that up. This is probably a conversation better had with DFO. I think we need to set several committees up and really go after these guys today that talk very favorable about our program and the support that they want to do and really start to engage them.

We have been watching the money flow, and it is quite heavy and it is quite fast, and in some cases it was unsolicited. We got $1.6 million unsolicited. I just got an email it has been awarded, and they're going to do a modification.

So there is a lot moving with this administration. I don't know how deep it has penetrated Indian Country. We are talking about
a workshop or an informational session at the conference in September to really talk about those opportunities, on and off reservation tribal communities. But they are massive in their dollars.

Business development, not loans, actually grant dollars for developing small businesses. Manufacturing is going to be in all -- that's a prime opportunity for reservation-based communities. I really think there is so much going on right now that we need to, you know, get aggressive about and try to get a handle on it.

So I was going to wait until tomorrow, but I think we need to create a couple of committees to really pinpoint some of those speakers today. I like some of the stuff I heard that -- the money that is available.

So I had another little chat question about making more time in our agendas -- maybe for our next meeting time to discuss more about the community and the needs of the grantee
community, and maybe an hour or an hour and a
half in there just for us to have discussion.
I'd like to get a little bit of feedback on that
before we wrap up in the next five minutes or so.

That was sent to me while we were in
this meeting today.

MEMBER SEVEN: So I have my hand up.
I have a couple of questions for Department of
Labor.

Athena, how are we doing -- because,
you know, you used to provide a report on the
carryover topic. How are we doing with the
carryover topic? And in light of a pandemic, is
there going to be a hold harmless on the
carryover topic for this last year?

And then I had another question in
terms of just administrative-type questions on
how the impact to our programs -- I'll leave that
one question right now while I remember my next
one.

CHAIR WALDRON: Athena?

MS. BROWN: Yeah. I was just unmuting
myself. We don't have the -- all the reports in yet to tell how much money we're going to be carrying forward.

But, and there is nothing in writing that the Department put out about policy, although the general -- general thought is that during the pandemic we're not going to -- we're not going to penalize anybody during this entire time of the pandemic because we know the extreme issues that the country faced with serving clients during that time when offices were completely shut down and clients impacted.

So we don't have those numbers right now, Kay. But as soon as we get them, you know, we will share them with the Council.

MEMBER SEVEN: I just remembered my other question was designation for the next four-year period. So will designation notices I think -- is that something that we should start seeing about fall time to get ready for the next program year?

MS. BROWN: Yeah. We don't have -- we
don't go through the designation -- you know,
like we used to go through a -- sort of an
advanced notice of intent when people applied for
the program, but we don't go through that process
anymore. But we will put out instructions --
formal instruction on the competition.

And, of course, the 477 grantees, all
they do is submit the application for federal
funds. They don't, you know, submit any
strategic four-year plans to the Department.

Is that where you were going or --

MEMBER SEVEN: Well, I -- it just --
it seems like in past years that the notices came
out a little late and grantees were struggling to
meet to try to get their plans done. I'm feeling
a little overwhelmed with the planning process
there.

MS. BROWN: Yes. Our FOA process has
changed a little in the Department. I understand
that it's going to be more streamlined. Knock on
wood. Hopefully, DINAP is going to be the --
sort of the first program that is using the new
funding opportunity process for issuing our competitive announcement.

So I am hopeful that we can get that out fairly early in the year, like in January or February. Yeah.

CHAIR WALDRON: Thank you. We have a couple of questions. We have Christine and Erwin. You've got to unmute.

MEMBER CAMPBELL: Thank you, Chairman. Chris Campbell representing Region 5. I think we're still being recorded, even though we're recapping, right?

So, anyway, I just wanted to kind of piggyback on what Kay said about the designation.

And I think we learned a very painful lesson the last designation period, that nobody got funded until the competition was decided.

And I thought that -- do you know what I'm talking about, Athena?

It was held up -- the grantee -- the funding was actually held up until the designation was over, until the competition was
finalized, the decisions were finalized. If you recall, folks weren't getting their funds until that was all completed.

I would hope that this designation period, if you're not having competition, your funds would not be held up.

MS. BROWN: I think what happened was I know that the funding was help up for certain grantees. I don't recall that it was help up for everyone. It might have been just after the Department made decisions on what money was going to go back into the pot.

But for those grantees that we know, I think we will probably have a better sense on the grantees that we know are competing for the funds this year. We have lost a few because of — you know, because of other reasons. But we sort of have a handle on those service areas. So I think that we, to the extent possible, will try to get that all resolved before we go into the competition.

MEMBER CAMPBELL: Yeah. I'm pretty
sure everybody was held up. The funding came out really late last competition period, but anyway, just hoping that we can, you know, improve that system and that the grant officer has maybe better understanding, too, of the urgency in our communities to get the funding out on time.

MS. BROWN: Yes. We'll try to take all of that into account. We do have a new grant officer, and we try to make sure that he is on top of everything that goes on in DINAP.

MEMBER CAMPBELL: Thank you. Just wanted to add my two beads worth on that.

MS. BROWN: We appreciate it, Chris.

Thank you.

CHAIR WALDRON: I know I'm making some faces here because I'm trying to see them little teeny hands. I see Erwin has one up for a question. So I'm not making faces on comments. I'm trying to see the screen.

So the Chair recognizes Erwin.

MEMBER PAHMAHMIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Erwin Pahmahmie, Region 4. I was
wondering if -- if it's possible for -- I mean, I
know you -- like you said, Lorinda -- or not
Lorinda -- Athena, that you guys haven't received
all of your reports just yet and stuff, but is it
permissible for you guys to disclose to the
Council on -- basically, I'm trying to see if we
can help like peer to peer with some of our other
grantees or, you know, that may be lacking or
maybe falling short or something?

In regards to that, you know, I mean,
if they have a high percentage of -- I mean, I
know you said the carryover and stuff, but we
don't want it to be where it looks like, you
know, when we're being funded, and it's even more
scary thinking that -- kind of like what Darrell
was saying earlier about, you know, we're not
authorized.

And, you know, they might say, well,
hey, we want to make sure that, you know, we can
help them out if they need help, you know, I
mean, because, you know, I've heard through the
grapevine there may be some other grantees that
may just need help.

    I guess it's maybe administering their programs or, you know, where we're going to have this -- you know, this carryover and stuff. I know that's a hot topic that we'll definitely, you know, have at the conference.

    But is that permissible, for you guys to disclose that to us once you find out who needs help and who doesn't?

    MS. BROWN: Yes, it is. You know, all of that information on reporting is public information. So as soon as we've had time to analyze where we are with carryover, we will definitely share that information.

    I think that this past funding year, program year 2020, is going to be really difficult. But, you know, we will certainly share how much money, you know, we have remaining across all programs with the Council, and with the disclaimer that we do know that the pandemic greatly affected grantees across the board.

    We did an early survey that Tribal
Tech administered through a SurveyMonkey, you know, just informally, how many -- how many grantees closed their offices during that time. So we do know that there was a large percentage of tribal offices that were closed, especially those in the smaller communities.

I think some of the larger urban organizations kept their doors open, probably with limited staff or limited virtual services. I think Joe Quintana was one of them located in L.A. that kept -- you know, that managed to keep his doors open.

But I do know that a lot of the small tribes, because of the restrictions around having telework processes in place, having limited resources for virtual communication, there was a marked decrease in services. And we did hear a lot -- we did receive a lot of questions and concerns from grantees across the board hoping that they weren't going to be penalized during that time.

And we did indicate informally, not
through written guidance, that -- you know, that
we definitely would take that into consideration.
The pandemic was -- you know, had a catastrophic
effect across the United States, so we are very
mindful of that.

But definitely we want to look at --
look at all of those numbers and then work --
again, we want to target what we're doing for
peer to peer and training and technical
assistance going forward.

We want to target and bring back
tribes, so that they are fully functional, fully
operational. We put out guidance to all of our
grantees that they should definitely consider
going out and buying that technology that would
allow them to continue to provide services
through virtual.

So we did put out some limited
guidance on purchasing computers and laptops and
things like that that would allow them to work --
to telework.

We also put out a little bit of
guidance on policies and how to revise those
policies so that they could telework.

CHAIR WALDRON: Well, we're at the
hour. I know it's in the Register -- this agenda
-- and it's important that we close on time. Is
that correct?

MS. BROWN: Yes.

CHAIR WALDRON: So we are at -- we're
a little past recess. But tomorrow -- so we
didn't get to the question and answer, Kim, about
putting time on our next agenda for a community
discussion, but we can bring it up tomorrow at
the beginning.

So we are at time. We're five minutes
over. So the Chair would recognize a recess
motion.

MEMBER HIBBELER: I move.

CHAIR WALDRON: The motion is made by
Patty Hibbeler for a recess until tomorrow. Is
there a second?

MEMBER CAMPBELL: I'll second.

CHAIR WALDRON: A motion has been made
and seconded. All those in favor, say aye.

(Chorus of aye.)

CHAIR WALDRON: It passes, let the

record show.

If you want to continue talking now,
you can, but we're off the record.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
went off the record at 4:35 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Native American Employment
and Training Council

Before: US DOL

Date: 06-15-21

Place: teleconference

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under
my direction; further, that said transcript is a
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[Signature]
Court Reporter