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FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR THE
INDIAN COMMUNITY: AN OVERVIEW

For the most part, Indians have fared better than the non-Indian population in government-wide budget cuts. As a general rule, where a large program with an Indian set-aside is reduced, the Indian funding is reduced on a proportional basis to the reduction in the program as a whole. However, special Indian programs were generally not cut as much as other domestic programs.

Seven federal agencies sponsor programs which fund recipients because of their special status as Indian people or Indian organizations. These include the Departments of Interior, Education, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, and Commerce. Outlays for Indian programs in the 1982 Reagan budget proposal total \$2,187 million, with budget authority of \$2,123. When Interior Trust Fund monies are included, the respective totals are \$2,511 and \$2,588 million. (The Reagan budget cuts 10.6% in outlays and 33.6% in budget authority from the Carter-proposed budget for FY 82.)

ESTIMATED FEDERAL FUNDS PER CAPITA AND PER FAMILY: \$3,000 in budget authority, \$3,100 in outlays; i.e. \$12,000+ per Indian

family of four. This exceeds federal support for any other identifiable American community.

These totals do not include federal assistance received by Indians that is available to all U.S. citizens, such as social security, food stamps, commodity food distribution, AFDC, legal services, unemployment compensation, home energy assistance. (Indians have higher per capita eligibility for food stamps and AFDC than population as a whole.)

These totals also do not include \$471 million paid by the United States in Indian claims over the past four years, and 1 billion in still pending claims. In addition, the above figures (resulting from cases where the United States is a defendant) do not reflect claims brought on behalf of Indian tribes by the United States (on a fully funded basis) in such matters as Maine land ownership, Arizona water rights, California fishing rights and a variety of similar claims of substantial value.

Indian Housing: The Indian program most drastically cut is the HUD-assisted Indian housing program. For FY 82, the Reagan budget proposes no further funding (the Carter Administration had proposed a one-third reduction). If the program were continued in its current status, costs per unit would reach

almost \$80,000 in 1982. Budget authority required per unit would be over \$175,000.

It should be noted that there are HUD Indian housing commitments of 15,000 units currently in the pipeline, and it will take three years just to complete these units.

Other federal programs specifically for Indians were generally not cut as much as other domestic programs.