



# NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

July 3, 2008

## Re: Presidential Transition Planning and Political Appointments

Dear Tribal Leaders and All Friends of Indian Country:

As we approach another Presidential election, NCAI is developing a strategy for the 2009 Presidential Transition. As a nonpartisan organization, NCAI is preparing for either a Democratic or Republican Administration. We need your assistance.

In the past, tribal issues have suffered from inattention during the early years of prior Administrations. Without clear goals and planning for Indian affairs, appointments and policy decisions are delayed, new appointees lack expertise in the issues that they will be required to manage, and the long term issues in Indian country are left unaddressed. Any significant reform efforts must start at the beginning of an Administration if they are to have a chance of success. To prepare for the 2009 transition NCAI is developing a comprehensive Indian Country Transition Plan, and we want to coordinate with all tribes and tribal organizations. Our initial memo is available on the NCAI website, [www.ncai.org](http://www.ncai.org). We need to start now to be ready in November.

Decisions on personnel matters are among the most important decisions made in the next Administration. The appointment of Native individuals in positions of importance and interest to Tribes recognizes the government-to-government relationship and facilitates the United States' trust responsibility to Tribes and individual Native people. As the national constituency group of tribal governments, NCAI is positioned to consult and work with the next President's transition representatives to ensure that Native people participate in the next Administration as political appointees. In addition, we want to ensure that all important political appointees are knowledgeable and supportive of tribal governments.

NCAI intends to make a concerted effort to influence the next Administration's political appointment process on behalf of Tribes. NCAI has developed a strategy to accomplish this goal as follows:

- Identify tribal policy priorities to set criteria for the experience needed by appointees.
- Identify Indian-specific and general positions of significance to Tribes in all federal departments and agencies.
- Compile résumés of accomplished Native professionals who are interested in seeking political appointments in the next Administration. Provide résumés to the next President's transition representatives and the White House Office of Presidential Personnel.
- Meet with transition representatives upon the election of the next President.
- Work with transition officials to appoint Native individuals to key positions in the White House and the federal departments and agencies, and to influence other major appointments of interest to tribes.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### PRESIDENT

**Joe A. Garcia**  
*Ohkay Owingeh*  
*(Pueblo of San Juan)*

#### FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

**Jefferson Keel**  
*Chickasaw*

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

**W. Ron Allen**  
*Jamestown S'Klallam*

#### TREASURER

**gaiaishkibos**  
*Lac Courte Oreilles*

#### REGIONAL VICE-

#### PRESIDENTS

##### ALASKA

**Mike Williams**  
*Akiak*

##### EASTERN OKLAHOMA

**Joe Grayson, Jr.**  
*Cherokee*

##### GREAT PLAINS

**Ron His Horse is Thunder**  
*Standing Rock Sioux*

##### MIDWEST

**Robert Chicks**  
*Stockbridge-Munsee*

##### NORTHEAST

**Randy Noka**  
*Narragansett*

##### NORTHWEST

**Ernie Stensgar**  
*Coeur d'Alene*

##### PACIFIC

**Juana Majel**  
*Pauma-Yuima*

##### ROCKY MOUNTAIN

**Willie Sharp, Jr.**  
*Blackfeet*

##### SOUTHEAST

**Archie Lynch**  
*Haliva-Saponi*

##### SOUTHERN PLAINS

**Darrell Flying Man**  
*Cheyenne-Arapaho*

##### SOUTHWEST

**Derek Valdo**  
*Pueblo of Acoma*

##### WESTERN

**Alvin Moyle**  
*Fallon Paiute Shoshone*

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Jacqueline Johnson**  
*Tlingit*

### NCAI HEADQUARTERS

1301 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.466.7767  
202.466.7797 fax  
[www.ncai.org](http://www.ncai.org)

The White House Office of Presidential Personnel and the federal departments and agencies work in coordination to search for and select applicants for political appointments. As a result, this is a highly competitive, demanding, but measured process. The White House makes the final decisions regarding political appointments. Our experience indicates that the currency in the White House Office of Presidential Personnel is résumés of qualified individuals. Opportunities to recommend Native applicants increase with the number of outstanding resumes on hand in the White House.

I would appreciate your assistance in our efforts to collect resumes of qualified Native professionals from your Tribe who are highly motivated to apply for political appointments in the next Administration. Please have interested applicants provide the following information to NCAI:

- 1) Send a recent resume preferably by e-mail to Tanya Deal, [tdeal@ncai.org](mailto:tdeal@ncai.org), or, if necessary by fax to 202-466-7767 or by mail to 1301 Connecticut Ave, NW, Washington DC 20036. The resume should include the applicant's name, address, telephone number(s), and e-mail address.
- 2) Send an e-mail or a cover letter which accompanies the applicant's resume in which the applicant: a) identifies areas of interest in the next Administration such as Agriculture, Arts, Defense, Economic Development, Education, Environment, Finance, Health, Homeland Security, Housing, International, Justice, Labor, Trade, Transportation, the White House, etc.; b) indicates previous positions in other Administrations, if any; c) indicates experience, if any, in the campaign of John McCain or Barack Obama; and d) provides tribal affiliation.

Applicants' resumes and associated information provided to NCAI will remain confidential.

After the next President is elected, NCAI will transmit the compilation of resumes of Native applicants who supported the President-elect to transition representatives as appropriate. At this point in the process, applicants will only hear from White House or Administration representatives, not from NCAI. Given the competitive and complex nature of the Presidential personnel process, NCAI cannot predict whether the next Administration will contact any particular applicant. NCAI will be only one avenue, and interested applicants should seek every opportunity to develop their own contacts with the next Administration.

If you have any questions about this process, please contact me or Virginia Davis at 202-466-7767. Thank you for your assistance regarding NCAI's 2009 Presidential Transition efforts.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Johnson  
Executive Director