

UTFAV Updates

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Legislative Proposal for Integrated Law Enforcement and Tribal Justice Funding

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The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) has drafted a legislative proposal to address the inadequacies of the federal funding system that is currently operation for tribal public safety programs.

Those working within the tribal justice system and public safety programs recognize that there are several inter-related challenges related to funding for tribal justice systems. One, the funding that is available is largely inadequate. Two, the available funding is amongst multiple federal agencies that

have separate and different programmatic and administrative requirements. Finally, it is recognized that a significant portion of funding is awarded through competitive grants, resulting in short-term, ineffective funding that undermines stability and strategic planning.

To combat these challenges, NCAI has developed a proposal that would allow Tribal governments the authority to group funding from different funding sources and programs into a single, organized

comprehensive program.

NCAI proposes that this comprehensive program would reduce administrative costs by using a lead agency (the Dept. of Interior) and eliminating duplicate reporting and unnecessary grant writing. Also, it is proposed that this model legislation would allow for more consistent and direct funding for long-term programs.

NCAI also recommends funding increases through specific tribal allocation set-asides including: A 10% tribal allocation from the Office

of Justice Programs (OJP); A 10% tribal allocation from the Crime Victims Fund (CVF); A 3% allocation from the Defender Services Program in the Financial Appropriations for the Tribal Indigent Defense; and increased funding for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) programs.

For more information, email rcarr@utfav.org

Michigan Legislature: SB 52 : Removing Statute of Limitations

Michigan State Senate Bill 52, sponsored by Senator Steve Bieda (D-Warren) cleared the Senate Judiciary Committee in late September. The bill would eliminate the statute of limitations for sexual abuse of a child (second degree criminal sexual conduct). Currently, the statute of limitations for sexual abuse of child requires that charges of

criminal sexual conduct against children, under age 16, be filed within 10 years after the offense or by the victim's 21st birthday, whichever would be later. Furthermore, the bill would also increase the statute of limitations for a violence of third degree criminal sexual conduct from 10 years or the victim's 21st birthday to 20 years after the offense or the victim's

31st birthday, whichever is later. Often times victims of child sexual abuse take considerable time to process the abuse they faced and even more time to report to authorities. SB 52 not only recognizes the complexities of child sexual abuse and the reluctance children face when reporting, but also the heinous nature of the

crime itself and thus the importance of accountability. Senator Bieda said "Michigan law must be able to hold perpetrators accountable, regardless of how long it takes victims to report". The bill is now on the Senate floor. please contact Rachel Carr at rcarr@utfav.org for more information about SB 52.