

104TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 346

To establish in the Department of the Interior the Office of Indian Women and Families, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 2 (legislative day, JANUARY 30), 1995

Mr. DOMENICI (for himself and Mr. INOUE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs

A BILL

To establish in the Department of the Interior the Office of Indian Women and Families, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Office of Indian
5 Women and Families Act of 1995”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) the primary responsibilities of the Bureau
9 of Indian Affairs are to encourage and assist Indian
10 people to manage their own affairs under the trust

1 relationship between Indians and the Federal Gov-
2 ernment, and to facilitate, with maximum involve-
3 ment of Indian people, full development of their
4 human and natural resource potential;

5 (2) the Bureau of Indian Affairs coordinates its
6 activities with Indian tribal governments, Federal
7 agencies and departments, and other organizations
8 and groups who share similar interests and pro-
9 grams related to Indians;

10 (3) Bureau of Indian Affairs policies, programs
11 and projects impact directly and significantly on the
12 lives of America's Indian people;

13 (4) the unique roles and responsibilities of In-
14 dian women contribute culturally, socially, and eco-
15 nomically to the well-being of Indian people, but
16 these contributions are often not fully realized and
17 are undervalued and overlooked within the policies,
18 program, and projects of the Bureau of Indian Af-
19 fairs;

20 (5) Indian children have special educational and
21 social service needs to prepare them for traditional
22 tribal responsibilities and nontribal social and em-
23 ployment opportunities;

24 (6) the particular responsibilities, contributions,
25 and needs of Indian women and families can and

1 should be taken into account to improve Bureau of
2 Indian Affairs policy formulation and program oper-
3 ations for the direct benefit of Indian women and
4 families and Indian people as a whole;

5 (7) Bureau of Indian Affairs policies, programs
6 and projects, including its coordination and liaison
7 with other Federal, State, and local entities, can be
8 more responsive and enhanced when Indian women
9 and families are considered an integral element of
10 the process as well as contributors to the success of
11 these policies, programs, and projects; and

12 (8) there is a need for an Office of Indian
13 Women and Families in the Bureau of Indian Af-
14 fairs for the purpose of encouraging and promoting
15 the participation and integration of Indian women
16 and families into Bureau of Indian Affairs policies,
17 programs, projects, and activities, thereby improving
18 the effectiveness of its mandate and the status and
19 lives of Indian women and families.

20 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

21 The purposes of this Act are—

22 (1) to identify and integrate the issues related
23 to Indian women and families into all Bureau of In-
24 dian Affairs policies, programs, projects, and activi-
25 ties. There will be a special emphasis on the eco-

1 nomic well-being of Indian women and families in-
2 cluding employment and business opportunities;

3 (2) to establish an office to serve as a focal
4 point for all Federal Government policy issues af-
5 fecting Indian women and families for purposes of
6 both economic and social development;

7 (3) to collect data related to the specific roles,
8 concerns, and needs of Indian women, and Indian
9 families, and use such data to support policy, pro-
10 gram, and project implementation throughout all of-
11 fices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and other Fed-
12 eral agencies, and to monitor the impacts of these
13 policies, programs and projects;

14 (4) to enhance the economic and social partici-
15 pation of Indian women and families in all levels of
16 planning, decisionmaking, and policy development
17 within the Bureau of Indian Affairs, its area offices,
18 and tribal governments and reservations;

19 (5) to conduct research and collect relevant
20 studies relating to special needs of Indian women
21 and families;

22 (6) to develop pilot programs and projects to
23 strengthen activities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs
24 involving Indian women and families, and serve as
25 models for future endeavors and planning;

1 (7) to ensure a liaison with other Federal de-
2 partments and agencies, State and local govern-
3 ments, tribally controlled community colleges, other
4 academic institutions, any public or private organi-
5 zations, and tribal governments that serve Indian
6 peoples;

7 (8) to ensure training endeavors for Bureau of
8 Indian Affairs offices and agencies at the national,
9 area, and local levels to ensure Bureau personnel
10 and any other beneficiaries of Bureau and other gov-
11 ernmental programs understand the purposes and
12 policies of the office established by this Act;

13 (9) to develop policy-level programs, with the
14 assistance of the Assistant Secretary and other sen-
15 ior-level personnel of the Bureau of Indian Affairs,
16 to ensure that systems, directives, management
17 strategies and other related methodologies are imple-
18 mented to meet the purposes of this Act;

19 (10) to strengthen the role of Indian women
20 and families by developing and ensuring culturally
21 appropriate policies and programs; and

22 (11) to encourage other actions that serve to
23 more fully integrate Indian women and families as
24 participants in and agents for change in the Federal

1 policy and program activities of the Bureau of In-
2 dian Affairs.

3 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

4 As used in this Act:

5 (1) The term “Indian woman” means a woman
6 who is a member of an Indian tribe.

7 (2) The term “Indian tribe” means any Indian
8 tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or com-
9 munity, any Alaska Native village or regional or vil-
10 lage corporation as defined in or established pursu-
11 ant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85
12 Stat. 688), which is recognized as eligible for special
13 programs and services provided by the United States
14 to Indians because of their status as Indians.

15 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE OF INDIAN WOMEN
16 AND INDIAN FAMILIES.**

17 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
18 Department of the Interior the “Office of Indian Women
19 and Families” (hereinafter referred to as the “Office”).

20 (b) DIRECTOR.—The Office shall be under the man-
21 agement of a director (hereinafter referred to as the “Di-
22 rector”), who shall be appointed by the Assistant Sec-
23 retary of Indian Affairs. The Director shall report directly
24 to the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs.

1 (c) COMPENSATION.—The Director shall be com-
2 pensated at the rate prescribed for level IV of the Execu-
3 tive Schedule under section 5313 of title 5, United States
4 Code.

5 (d) TENURE.—The Director shall serve at the discre-
6 tion of the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs.

7 (e) VACANCY.—A vacancy in the position of Director
8 shall be filled in the same manner as the original appoint-
9 ment was made.

10 (f) DUTIES.—The Director shall administer the Of-
11 fice and carry out the purposes and functions of this Act.
12 The Director shall take such action as may be necessary
13 in order to integrate Indian women and family issues into
14 the Bureau of Indian Affairs policies, programs, projects
15 and activities.

16 **SEC. 6. FUNCTIONS OF OFFICE.**

17 It shall be the function of the Office to develop a pol-
18 icy paper for Indian women and families to articulate the
19 objectives of the Office, to serve as a guideline for system-
20 atically integrating Indian women and families issues into
21 the Bureau of Indian Affairs policies, programs, projects,
22 and activities, and to establish and detail indicators and
23 benchmarks for measuring the success of the Office.

1 **SEC. 7. POLICY TASK FORCE.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF A POLICY TASK FORCE.—
3 The Director, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary
4 of Indian Affairs, shall establish a temporary policy task
5 force on Indian women and families.

6 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—Members of the task force shall
7 be appointed by the Director. The task force shall include
8 representatives from Federal agencies and departments,
9 relevant Indian organizations, State agencies and organi-
10 zations, Indian tribal governments, institutions of higher
11 education, and nongovernmental and private sector orga-
12 nizations and institutions.

13 (c) FUNCTIONS.—The policy task force shall—

14 (1) ensure that the Policy Paper for Indian
15 women and families prepared by the Bureau of In-
16 dian Affairs articulates a set of goals, objectives,
17 management strategies, and monitoring systems for
18 the improvement of all Federal programs, including
19 programs of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, designed
20 to improve the quality of life of Indian women and
21 families;

22 (2) recommend a permanent policy mechanism
23 to be established in the Bureau of Indian Affairs for
24 the continuous monitoring and refinement of policy
25 and programs designed to improve the quality of life
26 of Indian women and families; and

1 (3) recommend a permanent policy mechanism
2 to be established in the Bureau of Indian Affairs for
3 the purpose of collecting and disseminating to Con-
4 gress and the public information and other data rel-
5 evant to the progress of the policy and programs de-
6 signed to improve the quality of life of Indian
7 women and families.

8 (d) TERMINATION.—The task force shall terminate
9 upon the expiration of fourteen months following the date
10 of the enactment of this Act.

11 **SEC. 8. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.**

12 The Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs shall—

13 (1) ensure that the Office receives adequate re-
14 sources to carry out the purposes of this Act; and

15 (2) ensure that senior-level staff members and
16 other employees of the Bureau of Indian Affairs are
17 participants in and responsible for assisting in carry-
18 ing out the purposes of this Act relating to the im-
19 provement of policies and programs of the Bureau of
20 Indian Affairs.

21 **SEC. 9. REPORTING.**

22 The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bu-
23 reau of Indian Affairs, shall, on or before March 15 of
24 each of the two calendar years next following the calendar
25 year in which this Act is enacted, and biennially there-

1 after, report to Congress on the progress of achieving the
2 purposes of this Act. Such report shall include, but not
3 be limited to, information relative to the current status
4 of progress of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' policy on In-
5 dian women and Indian families in fulfilling its objectives,
6 programs and projects, including how well the Bureau of
7 Indian Affairs has operationally integrated the issue of In-
8 dian women and families into its overall policies, pro-
9 grams, projects, and activities. Such report shall include
10 a review of data gathered to assess and improve the qual-
11 ity of life of Indian women and families, including specific
12 recommendations to improve the education, health, em-
13 ployment, economic, housing, social, and other services
14 within the Bureau of Indian Affairs relating to Indian
15 women and families.

16 **SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATIONS.**

17 Commencing with fiscal year 1994, and each fiscal
18 year thereafter, there are authorized to be appropriated
19 for carrying out the provisions of this Act, \$2,000,000.

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