

**2010 APPROVED  
WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE  
for the  
INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**Members**

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Sen. John Pinto, Co-Chair  
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Rep. Eliseo Lee Alcon  
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**Advisory Members**

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Sen. Stuart Ingle  
Sen. Timothy Z. Jennings  
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Sen. Richard C. Martinez  
Rep. Debbie A. Rodella  
Rep. Nick L. Salazar  
Sen. William E. Sharer

**Work Plan**

The Indian Affairs Committee (IAC), was again created by the New Mexico Legislative Council to address issues that affect Native Americans in New Mexico. The IAC has existed since 1989 as a result of post-session New Mexico Legislative Council action each year. In view of the fact that the committee's work addresses issues relating principally to New Mexico's Native American population, the committee strives to conduct its meetings in locations that are accessible to the state's tribal members and their leaders. The committee views its meetings as an essential way of relating the work of the legislature to this segment of its constituency. Moreover, meeting at the various nations, tribes and pueblos facilitates government-to-government cooperation.

Travel

This year, however, the committee plans to limit its travel outside of the State Capitol in Santa Fe in order to cut down on travel costs for members, legislative staff and other agencies. Additionally, meetings held farther away from the State Capitol will limit the number of executive agency personnel on the agendas and focus on hearing from the local constituency.

On July 12 and 14, the committee proposes to meet at the Pueblo of Tesuque and Ohkay Owingeh, respectively. The committee has not met with the Pueblo of Tesuque or Ohkay Owingeh since 2005.

On August 19, the committee proposes to meet at the Pueblo of Jemez because it has not

met there since 2004. The Pueblo of Jemez presents an ideal location to learn about the recent voting rights concerns, including staffing, expenses and locations for early voting precincts in the area.

On August 20, the committee proposes to meet at the Pueblo of Zia because it has not met there since 2005. Senate Finance Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 1 provided over \$280,000 for improvements to the Pueblo of Zia senior center, and the pueblo provides an excellent location for the Aging and Long-Term Services Department to present on Native American needs and the efficiency and effectiveness of its programs.

On September 14, the committee proposes to meet in Gallup in order to take advantage of meeting with and hearing from the various Navajo chapters of the Eastern Navajo Agency located in Gallup. Additionally, there have also been recent hate crimes in Gallup and most recently in the Farmington area. The committee can hear from local law enforcement on the status of the cases and community relations with Native Americans.

On September 15, the committee proposes to meet at the Thoreau Chapter of the Navajo Nation. It has not met with the Thoreau Chapter since 2002. The continued increase in suicides and attempted suicides in Native American communities, particularly in this area of the state, necessitates a meeting in this location. Firsthand accounts and observations are invaluable to understanding this serious issue. The Department of Health and other executive agencies have already formed a "unified command team" based out of Thoreau. Additionally, this meeting location is accessible to other nearby Navajo chapters located in Prewitt.

On October 12 and 13, the committee proposes to meet in Mescalero. The committee was forced to cancel its previous meetings in Mescalero because of special sessions. The committee has not met with the Mescalero Apache Tribe since 2006. Late last year, the Mescalero tribe dealt with a series of teen suicides similar to the situation in Thoreau. Meeting in Mescalero will provide the members with a firsthand account of the steps taken by the tribe and state agencies to address this issue. Addressing teen suicide in two different locations and with two different tribes will allow the committee to draw conclusions on best practices while keeping in mind that each Native American community in New Mexico has its own distinct culture, core values and needs.

On November 23, the committee proposes to meet at the Pueblo of Pojoaque. The location will still minimize travel costs and still facilitate government-to-government cooperation. The committee will meet in Santa Fe for its last meeting and finalize its work on government restructuring and legislative endorsements.

#### Issue Areas

During the 2010 interim, the committee proposes to focus in large part on economic and infrastructure development and the reduction of duplication, with increased effectiveness of services and benefits funded by the state and by the federal government.

A. The committee proposes to provide guidance and recommendations to the Government Restructuring Task Force by examining the programs and missions of the Indian Affairs Department and other agencies overseen by the committee with an eye toward making those agencies more efficient and cost-effective, including ranking programs in terms of criticality to the core functions of those agencies. The committee will coordinate, as needed, with other committees regarding presentations of subject matter of common concern.

B. The committee also proposes to explore and discuss the major issue areas affecting Native Americans during the 2010 interim as follows:

1. capital outlay, including tracking the expenditure of allocated funds, alternative funding sources and coordination with the Navajo Nation;
2. funding of projects from the Tribal Infrastructure Project Fund, including projections of allocated amounts pursuant to House Bill 162;
3. the coordinated multi-agency five-year plan to address the uranium legacy and cleanup of abandoned uranium mining and milling sites led by the United States Environmental Protection Agency;
4. the implications of Mt. Taylor being designated a traditional and cultural property in coordination with the Land Grant Committee pursuant to House Memorial 74;
5. the increase in hate crimes against Native Americans in recent years;
6. efforts to ensure an accurate count of Native Americans in the 2010 census;
7. public safety in Indian country, including tribal emergency management services and state tribal coordination;
8. settlement of state income tax refund claims from the Native American Veterans' Income Tax Settlement Fund;
9. the implications of *Garcia v. Gutierrez*, 2009-NMSC-044, in state and tribal jurisdiction on domestic matters;
10. the feasibility of establishing Shiprock Pinnacle as a state park pursuant to House Joint Memorial 69, 2009 legislative session;
11. implementation of the increased penalties pursuant to the Indian Arts and Crafts Sales Act;
12. Native American education, including improvements to performance, closing the achievement gap, cooperation with the Bureau of Indian Education and implementation of

the Indian Education Act;

13. the disproportionate incarceration of Native Americans in relation to the population;

14. health care for Native Americans in Native American communities, including national health care reform, Medicaid funding, mental health care and addressing high rates of youth suicides among Native Americans;

15. status of the *Aamodt* and Pueblo of Taos and Abeyta Indian water rights settlements;

16. implementation of the State-Tribal Collaboration Act;

17. economic development in Indian country, including green jobs and industry;  
and

18. planning protocols and cooperation for Indian Day at the Legislature.

**Indian Affairs Committee  
2010 Approved Meeting Schedule**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
June 23	Santa Fe
July 12-14	Pueblo of Tesuque Santa Fe Ohkay Owingeh
August 19-20	Pueblo of Jemez Pueblo of Zia
September 14-15	Gallup Thoreau Chapter
October 11-12	Mescalero
November 23-24	Pueblo of Pojoaque Santa Fe