

A. Monteau (IAD General Counsel) – IAC 9-26-12

- Testimony of AIPC at the September 26th IAC meeting discussed “the relationship between the Pueblos and the present administration.”
- Regarding the comment of AIPC on the State-Tribal Summit and requests to meet with the Governor to discuss how the Summit process would work best with the tribes – IAD was never made aware of such requests and was not asked to be a part of any meeting. In-fact, IAD invited AIPC to be a member of the Summit planning committee, of which the Governor’s Cabinet Director, David Jablonski, was a member also. AIPC chose not to participate in the planning of the Summit.
- Regarding the topic areas discussed at the Summit, a survey was sent to tribal leaders on which topics should be on the agenda. Per the STCA, only issues of mutual concern can be addressed at the Summit. Furthermore, because it is a one-day meeting, the planning committee decided it would be best to focus the meeting on the 4-5 topics that received the most votes on the survey.
- AIPC brought up a number of important issues in their testimony on 9-26-12 – The State-Tribal Summit, Cultural Properties, Health Care, Water Settlements, etc.
- As a cabinet-level department, the Indian Affairs Department is the lead coordinating agency in New Mexico state government for ensuring effective interagency and state-tribal government-to-government relations. Our agency aims to ensure that there is effective tribal participation in State government. However, it is important to emphasize that IAD is not the subject matter expert in areas like Education, Health Care, Water, etc. We have specific state agencies that specialize in these areas and IAD’s mission is to bring the tribes to these agencies, these experts, and ensure that tribal people have a voice in State government. If we are not able to address a concern brought up by tribal leadership directly because it is beyond our expertise, then we can certainly bring the tribal leadership to the right people. That is our mission and we feel that this is the most efficient way to address tribal concerns.
- Regarding AIPC’s comments on the N.M. Cultural Properties Act, IAD would be happy to set up a meeting between tribal leaders and the Department of Cultural Affairs to discuss any anticipated legislation or regulations. This issue had not been brought up to IAD by leadership until now. If the leadership is seeking “more teeth” in that Act, a sponsor and proposed changes would be needed.
- Regarding Health Care Reform, IAD has been deeply involved with HSD and the DOH. AIPC’s comment was that IAD needs to support tribes with future health care reform, and we feel we are making a strong effort to do just that. IAD has co-hosted a number of tribal collaboration meetings with these agencies. But again, the agencies that handle health care reform are far more qualified to address the concerns of tribal leaders, as opposed to IAD.
- With regard to Water Settlements, the Office of the State Engineer would be the appropriate entity to directly respond to tribal concerns, although IAD does work to keep up on the issues. AIPC comments that the State needs to come up with its cost share of the settlements authorized under federal law. Governor Martinez introduced legislation last session towards accomplishing this, but the legislation was defeated. It’s going to take an Act of the legislature to accomplish this goal and as a result of the Summit, OSE is committed to educating the legislators on the issue of cost share. OSE gave this committee an informative and thoughtful presentation at October’s IAC meeting.
- IAD is on the agenda at every monthly AIPC meeting and we have made presentations at most of these meetings. IAD is very committed to maintaining a positive working relationship with tribal leadership. IAD and Secretary Allison have attempted to schedule meetings with the AIPC officers but have been unsuccessful thus far.