

-Oversight Hearing-

*“Reviewing the Broken Promises Report:
Examining the Chronic Federal Funding Shortfalls in Indian Country.”*

OPENING STATEMENT

November 19, 2019

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As you mentioned we will be discussing a 2018 report from the United States Commission on Civil Rights titled, Broken Promises: Continuing Federal Funding Shortfall for Native Americans.

The Commission examined the budgets and expenditures of six major federal agencies that sponsor programs serving Native Americans in the areas of healthcare, criminal justice, education, housing, and others.

The 2018 report served as both an update to the Commission’s 2003 report and as an expanded review of what the federal government has done since 2003 to better serve Native Americans.

The Commission majority reported that over the last 15 years, only minor improvements have been achieved with federal funding remaining flat.

I certainly agree there are many areas that we can all work together, along with the appropriations committee to ensure unmet needs are being addressed.

However, in 2017 the Government Accountability Office identified several programs that serve Tribes at high risk for waste, fraud and abuse.

We must ensure that when there is an increase of federal funding for any federal program, those programs are efficient.

I also believe that this Congress, and specifically this committee, do more to allow Tribes greater control over the programs that serve them.

Bureaucratic red tape causes delays that only make situations worse.

Tribes know best how to serve their communities and that should certainly be part of the conversation today.

I want to thank the witnesses for being here today and look forward to their testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.