

**Testimony of Rep. Deb Haaland (NM-1)**  
**Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee Member Day FY21**  
**Tuesday, March 10, 2020 in H-309, The Capitol**

Chairwoman McCollum, Ranking Member Joyce, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to speak about some key issues in the Interior Appropriations bill.

I want to start by thanking you for your great work on the FY20 bill.

Last year, I asked for your help with the Payment in Lieu of Taxes and Secure Rural Schools programs, and you delivered, including a 2-year reauthorization for SRS. I appreciate your continued support for SRS and PILT, and I'll continue to work to get a permanent SRS solution through my National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands subcommittee.

I am also grateful to you for including a yearlong moratorium on new oil and gas leasing within 10 miles of the Chaco Culture National Historical Park in FY20 and for funding for a cultural resources investigation. Just last week, BLM released a Resource Management Plan Amendment for the area that ignores the recommendations of experts and would allow drilling much closer than 10 miles. So I ask you to again include language that will protect the homeland of my ancestors.

Thank you for reversing the President's proposed cut to the Land and Water Conservation Fund in FY20. He proposed to cut it again by 97 percent in FY21. I urge you to fully fund LWCF at the authorized \$900 million level, although last week the President tweeted his support for making LWCF full funding mandatory, so maybe that won't be necessary, we'll see.

Last year, I asked for your assistance with funding for public safety programs and health care for Native Americans, and again you delivered. I appreciate the increase for Indian Health Services and the language you included requesting a plan from IHS on how it will fully fund and implement the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. I am also grateful for your efforts to increase funding for law enforcement and tribal courts and to support programs to address recidivism in Indian Country by providing mental health and substance abuse services when needed by juvenile and adult detainees and prisoners. I urge you to continue that good work in FY21.

I am especially grateful that you worked to significantly increase funding for implementation of the Violence Against Women Act in Indian Country, because more than 4 in 5 American Indian/Alaska Native women have experienced violence within their lives, and 56.1 percent have experienced sexual violence. Your continued support in these areas will help change the lives of Native American women and girls.

The government shutdown in early 2020 showed us how tribal communities can be vulnerable during a lapse in appropriations, which puts Native American lives in danger. I support your efforts in the FY20 bill to investigate the changes needed to develop and manage an advance appropriation for IHS and I welcome the opportunity to continue working with you on this through the authorization and appropriations processes.

Finally, there is a briefing tomorrow about water access in this country. It will highlight a study released last year that reported that Native American households are 19 times less likely than white households to have indoor plumbing. 58 out of every 1,000 Native American households lack complete plumbing. And an estimated 30 percent or more of people on Navajo Nation land lack access to running water. I appreciate your support for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving funds to help build and repair water infrastructure nationwide and across Indian Country, and I urge you to do what you can to increase that funding level and set aside a greater portion to go to Tribes.

Thank you again for the great work you've been doing, and for the opportunity to testify.