

Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States
Remote Oversight Hearing - Cisco WebEx
June 17, 2021
12:00 p.m.

Oversight Hearing on “*Examining Federal Facilities in Indian Country*”

Questions from Rep. Grijalva for Mr. Randy Grinnell, Deputy Director for Management Operations, Indian Health Service

1. Your written testimony notes that, as of 2016, the estimated total need for IHS’ Health Care Facilities Construction (HCFC) Program is approximately \$14.5 billion. An update to this estimate is in progress. However, IHS currently estimates the total need to be around \$22 billion.
 - a. Generally, what do these figures represent? Can you elaborate on IHS’ calculation of its total estimated need for Facilities Construction?
 - b. Why do the Health Care Facilities Construction estimates get to be so high?
2. You have provided us with written updates on the Pima Indian Medical Center (PIMC) and the Gallup Indian Medical Center (GIMC), both of which remain on the 1993 Health Care Facilities Construction Priority list.
 - a. Can you briefly explain the process of completely replacing an IHS facility and how the backlog of deferred maintenance impacts this process?
 - b. What role to tribal governments play in this process?
3. Briefly, can you explain the costs associated with maintaining and replacing IHS’ medical equipment?
 - a. How does aging medical equipment affect patient care?
4. Your testimony mentions IHS’ effort to improve and update its electronic health records system.
 - a. Is it possible to provide us with a brief update on this project?
 - b. What additional resources does IHS need to complete this task?
5. Your testimony estimates the entire IHS maintenance backlog to be at \$945 million—does this amount include construction projects?
 - a. How does this backlog affect IHS’ patient population?
6. Briefly, can you explain IHS’ Sanitation Facilities Construction (SFC) program and why it is so vital to disease prevention activities?
 - a. Can you also address how the SFC program contributes to money saved down the line in patient care?

7. The President's budget proposes advance appropriations for IHS. This has been a priority of the Committee's for some time now and we are pleased to see its inclusion in the budget.
 - a. Can you explain why advance appropriations for IHS is ultimately an issue of parity?

Questions from Rep. Grijalva for Mr. Jason Freihage, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs

1. How does the President's budget address facilities needs for tribal courts?
2. The DOI Office of Inspector General conducted a report on BIA's detention facilities in 2003, and updated in 2016. A key finding was BIA's inability to adequately maintain complete and accurate information regarding the detention facilities, which contributed to a likely underestimate of BIA's maintenance backlog needs.
 - a. Are you able to share with us a current update on BIA's data collection practices regarding the maintenance and construction needs of BIA detention centers?
3. Overall, how much would it cost to replace the law enforcement and detention centers that are currently in poor condition?
 - a. What infrastructural deficiencies define a BIA detention center as being in "poor condition?"
 - b. What did the poor condition of BIA detention centers impact inmate populations during the Coronavirus pandemic?
4. Generally, in what ways are tribal governments impacted by BIA's deferred maintenance backlog?
5. The BIA budget includes a proposal to re-establish the Indian Land Consolidation Program in the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
 - a. Can you explain the history behind this program and why it is vital to tribal infrastructure?

Questions from Rep. Grijalva for Hon. David Hill, Principal Chief, Muscogee (Creek) Nation

1. Can you provide additional context to the existing federal and tribal detention centers in Oklahoma and how the Muscogee (Creek) Nation utilizes them?
2. In your opinion, are these existing facilities sufficient to support the Nation's current and (growing) public safety needs?
 - a. How does the current detention center infrastructure impact other tribal nations in your region?
3. In your opinion, does the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's public safety infrastructure needs fall under the priorities expressed in the President's American Jobs Plan?

- a. If Indian Country's federal facilities were left out of the American Jobs Plan, what message would that send to tribal leaders like yourself?
4. Can you briefly run through the existing barriers that the Muscogee (Creek) Nation faces in seeking out new venues or facilities to support the existing public safety infrastructure?
5. BIA's budget proposal includes approximately \$4 million in additional funding for the support of Tribal Courts. Given what you've shared today, is this increase enough to address your Nation's tribal courts' needs and all other tribal governments?

Questions from Rep. Grijalva for Hon. Ned Norris, Jr., Chairman, Tohono O'odham Nation

1. After notifying BIE about the Santa Rosa Ranch School's safety concerns in 2018, BIE closed the school for "high priority deficiencies" until 2019, when five modular buildings were provided.
 - a. If the BIE had the funding to promptly address the 2015 safety issues, do you think that the school would have avoided closure?
 - b. During the time of the school closure, how were students and teachers impacted by the school closure and the modular units?
 - c. What lessons could be learned from this experience, and how will BIE avoid school closures in the future?
2. Are any of the Nation's other BIE-funded schools on the BIE list of facilities in poor condition, in addition to the Santa Rosa Ranch School?

Questions from Rep. Grijalva for Hon. Timothy Nuvangyaoma, Chairman, Hopi Tribe

1. Your testimony highlights that BIA once held both juveniles and adults in the same holding spaces following the closure of the juvenile correctional facility.
 - a. Can you elaborate on this decision and how it compromised the safety of the minors involved?
2. You note that BIA formally condemned and closed the Hopi Detention Center without consulting the Hopi tribal government. Can you elaborate on this?
 - a. In your opinion, how is adequate tribal consultation a critical component of improving Indian Country's infrastructure?
3. You briefly noted the conditions of the BIE schools on your reservation, and as other witnesses have testified, this continues to be an issue that needs to be addressed in Indian Country. You mentioned that the schools rely on modular buildings while the main facilities are facing numerous safety issues.
 - a. If these safety issues continue to be underfunded, what would that mean for the Tribe?

- b. Is the possibility of closure a significant concern, and if so, would the Tribe have anywhere else to host the students until temporary facilities are introduced?
- 4. Your testimony touches upon a Resolution that the Tribe authorized to establish a Committee that will develop plans for a new facility. Yet, there were no federal funds available at the time to finalize the project.
 - a. You also noted the Tribe's extensive advocacy for the needs of a permanent detention facility, yet no progress has been made. Can you share the importance of allocating funds to the BIA to address cases like the Hopi Detention Center adequately?