



COALITION OF LARGE TRIBES

Blackfeet Nation • Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe • Crow Nation • Eastern Shoshone Tribe
Fort Belknap Indian Community • Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation • Navajo Nation • Northern Arapaho Tribe
Oglala Sioux Tribe • Rosebud Sioux Tribe • Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe
Shoshone Bannock Tribes • Spokane Tribe • Ute Indian Tribe • Walker River Paiute Tribe

September 17, 2023

Hon. Bryan Newland
Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior 1849 C Street, N.W. MS-4660-MIB
Washington, DC 20240

Reference: Request for Priority Attention to COLT Member Tribes

Dear Assistant Secretary Newland:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT) in reference to recent events that may trigger a federal government shutdown and disproportionately impact our member tribes. As you know, we are an intertribal organization representing the interests of the more than 50 tribes with reservations of 100,000 acres or more. As treaty tribes that are guaranteed direct federal services to our tribal nations and citizens, we are very concerned and seek to establish communication with your office as soon as possible.

With less than 2 weeks before the end of this fiscal year, Congress appears to have internal divisions that may result in drastic consequences for the federal government and tribal nations. In light of the short time frame with government funding, we seek the earliest assistance from your office for the following: (i) update concerning ASIA's plan of operations for the shutdown (e.g., essential, non-essential, communications, etc.); (ii) update on remaining current fiscal year funds in COLT regions; (iii) the soonest clarity on contracting, direct and indirect, going forward; and (iv) any other relevant information / updates for COLT member tribes to prepare for all of the possible scenarios as best as possible.

As you likely are aware, a government shutdown would have disastrous consequences for our COLT member tribes. We hope a short term extension is worked out in Congress to provide more time to negotiate and pass appropriations for the entire federal government. However, as elected tribal leaders, we must prepare for worst case scenarios as well. COLT would greatly appreciate your immediate assistance in this regard.

Respectfully,

Marvin Weatherwax, COLT Chairman