

Tribal Workgroup on Trust Reform and Settlement
Chief Jim Gray, *Co-Chair* • President Tex Hall, *Co-Chair*

April 1, 2005

Tribal Leaders and Tribal organizations

RE: Tribal Workgroup on Trust Reform and Settlement and Technical Team

Dear Leaders, Representatives, and Advocates:

We are writing on behalf of the Tribal Workgroup on Trust Reform and Settlement (the "Workgroup") to reaffirm our commitment to working with your tribe or organization and to thank you for your involvement and support of this important initiative. As you know, the Workgroup was formed to provide recommendations to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and the House Resources Committee as they draft legislation to settle the *Cobell* lawsuit and reform current trust systems. Representatives of the *Cobell* team are participating in the Workgroup, and it is open to each and every Indian Nation and organization that wishes to participate.

Yesterday, the staffs of Chairman McCain and Vice-Chairman Dorgan made it clear again that they intend to move ahead with the drafting and introduction of a trust reform and settlement bill as early as possible this spring, followed by hearings this summer, and a redrafting of the bill during the Congressional August recess. We are very grateful to the Senators, Representatives, and their staffs for their willingness to participate in our discussions.

Last month, this Workgroup directed the formation of a Technical Team composed of experts, advocates, lawyers, accountants, and others to support the efforts of the Workgroup. Yesterday, the Technical Team held its first national conference call and over 40 people participated on behalf of tribes and organizations across Indian Country. Once again, we thank you for your participation and service. We especially appreciate the efforts of Steve Kelly and Wilson Pipestem, who we have asked to serve as co-chairs of the Technical Team.

The Workgroup will hold its first national tribal meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on Friday, April 8th, graciously hosted by the Osage Nation at the Post Oak Lodge. At that time, all Indian tribes and tribal organizations are invited to present their views and recommendations on what Congress should include or exclude in its trust reform and settlement legislation. All subjects regarding the draft bill are open for discussion, including trust standards, historical accounting, access to the judgment fund, core business systems, land consolidation and so forth.

Prior to the meeting on April 8th, the Workgroup has called for the Technical Team to meet in Tulsa on April 7th at the Post Oak Lodge and focus discussion on the land consolidation issue. We expect that the Technical Team will report back to the Workgroup with ideas and recommendations the following day. The Workgroup will use tribal, Technical Team, tribal organization, and other recommendations as the basis for principles and recommendations for a draft bill.

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Since timing is critical, we have directed the Technical Team to again assemble in San Diego on Monday, April 11th to discuss the trust reform component of the legislation, which will include trust standards. Afterwards, the Technical Team will report back to the Workgroup with a summary of the discussion and recommendations.

To remain on schedule, we have requested that the Technical Team meet again in Washington, D.C. on April 20th to address the issues of historical accounting and trust reform.

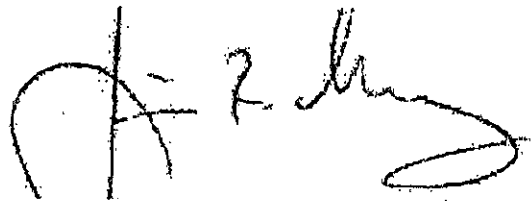
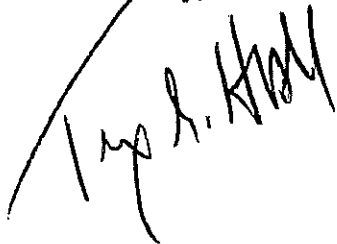
The Workgroup will formally convene again in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on Monday, May 2nd for a second national meeting with Indian tribes and tribal organizations and others who wish to submit their views and recommendations on Congressional trust reform and settlement legislation.

The Technical Team will meet in Albuquerque on Tuesday, May 3rd to discuss individual asset mismanagement claims. The Technical Team will then hold a national conference call on Wednesday, May 11th to continue to discussions on the issues of land consolidation, historical accounting, trust reform, and individual asset mismanagement.

We are in the process of scheduling future Workgroup and Technical Team meetings in the Northwest and the Great Plains during the month of May at which there will be additional opportunities for Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and others to submit their views and recommendations on Congressional trust reform and settlement legislation. We expect that the Technical Team meeting in the Northwest will address the issue of tribal participation in trust asset management. We will provide you with a formal notice of the exact dates, locations, and staff contacts as these are finalized.

Once again, we are excited about working with all of Indian Country on formulating advice and recommendations for Congress as it moves to enact trust reform and settlement legislation. We sincerely value all of your advice, input, and support.

Sincerely,



Tex G. Hall, Co-chairman
Tribal Workgroup on Trust Reform
and Settlement
President, NCAI
Chairman, MHA Nation

Jim Gray, Co-chairman
Tribal Workgroup on Trust Reform
and Settlement
Chairman, ITMA
Chief, Osage Nation