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## **ITMA PROVIDES RECOMMENDATIONS ON TRUST REFORM LEGISLATION**

*Albuquerque, NM*-- The Intertribal Monitoring Association (ITMA) released comments today on the Indian Trust Reform Act of 2005, legislation intended to address Indian trust asset management and resolve historical accounting claims.

"These recommendations are the result of a great deal of careful consideration and collaboration in Indian country." said ITMA Chairman Chief Jim Gray.

Throughout 2005 ITMA worked closely with The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the Cobell Plaintiff Attorneys in a National Trust Reform and Cobell Settlement Workgroup (Workgroup) to discuss the Indian Trust Reform Act of 2005. ITMA held a membership meeting in late January 2006 to discuss the proposed legislation and allow member tribes an opportunity to provide input on the specifics of the legislation.

As a result of the Workgroup's efforts and the ITMA membership meeting ITMA has provided detailed comments and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

Gray concluded, " We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the Senate and House Committees to improve the federal government's trust responsibilities owed to Indian tribes and individual Indian.."

ITMA's comments address five of the six titles of the legislation, reserving its comments on Title I, relating to the settlement of the Cobell litigation, pending the outcome of the March 1, 2006 joint oversight hearing by the Senate Indian Affairs Committee and the House Resources Committee on this subject.

In summary, ITMA's position calls for Congress to move forward with structural improvements at the Department of Interior, expand and enhance tribal governance over trust assets, reduce fractionation of trust assets and implement meaningful trust asset oversight over the Department. A copy of the full text of ITMA's comments to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs is available upon request.

ITMA is a national non-profit tribal consortium of 64 tribes. ITMA was organized in 1990 to actively monitor and facilitate trust fund and asset management initiatives. To learn more please visit: <http://www.itmatrustfunds.org>.

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