

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

On August 8, 2025, EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin announced the termination of the \$7 billion Solar for All program, eliminating over \$500 million in funding for six tribal-focused organizations. The decision follows congressional repeal of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act and will halt dozens of shovel-ready tribal solar projects, including \$62 million in planned initiatives by the Midwest Tribal Energy Resources Association.

Tribal energy advocates and partners, including the Alliance for Tribal Clean Energy, condemned the move as a blow to tribal sovereignty and a setback for combating energy poverty in Indian Country.

HEALTH

Senator Lisa Murkowski's (R-AK) staff provided a draft summary of the Native Children's Commission Implementation Act which she plans to introduce. Her office also requested comments on the draft legislation. The summary was shared with the Navajo Department of Children and Family Services.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The National Indian and Native American Employment and Training Conference (NINAETC) announced its 45th annual gathering, scheduled for December 8-11, 2025, in Providence, Rhode Island. Established in 1979, NINAETC is the largest national forum for Indian and Native American workforce development, bringing together WIOA Section 166 and Public Law 102-477 grantees. The conference will provide training, highlight program accomplishments, and offer a platform for tribal governments, organizations, and federal partners to strategize on employment and training priorities. Regional training opportunities will be announced separately.

U.S. Small Business Administration issued an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) declaration for Arizona on August 18, 2025, covering losses from the Dragon Bravo and White Sage Fires (incident period beginning July 4, 2025). The declaration applies to Coconino County and contiguous counties in Arizona (Gila, Mohave, Navajo, Yavapai) and Utah (Kane, San Juan). Impacted businesses, small agriculture cooperatives, and nonprofits without credit available elsewhere may apply for EIDL assistance at lending.sba.gov through May 18, 2026. Interest rates are set at 4.0% for businesses/co-ops and 3.625% for nonprofits.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

On August 27, 2025, the Departments of Labor, Commerce, and Education released a new workforce plan following an April 2025 White House directive. The strategy emphasizes industry-driven training in critical sectors (manufacturing, aerospace, semiconductors, energy, etc.), prioritizing skills-based credentials over college degrees, and consolidating federal workforce programs under the proposed “Make America Skilled Again” (MASA) block grant, cutting \$1.64 billion from current funding.

The plan also calls for eliminating or reforming Job Corps, SCSEP, Adult Education, and Federal Work-Study, while expanding apprenticeships, AI workforce hubs, and streamlining reporting. The changes would centralize programs, tie funding to performance, and shift risks to service providers through pay-for-performance models.

AGRICULTURE

On August 1, 2025, Representative Sharice Davids (D-KS-3) introduced H.R. 3956, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) Act of 2025, to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. The bill would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into self-determination contracts and self-governance agreements with Indian entities for the administration and procurement of FDPIR food packages. The legislation aims to empower tribes with greater flexibility and cultural relevance in food sourcing, replacing existing demonstration programs with permanent authority for tribal administration under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.

Also on August 1, 2025, Senator Tina Smith (D-MN) introduced S.1237, the New Producer Economic Security Act, to establish a competitive grant program within USDA’s Farm Service Agency aimed at improving land, capital, and market access for beginning, disadvantaged, and tribal producers. The bill prioritizes direct assistance, land acquisition support, and technical assistance through eligible entities—including Tribes and Native CDFIs—and includes provisions for tribal consultation and land transition planning. If enacted, the program would strengthen local food systems and expand opportunities for first-time and underserved agricultural producers.

AGRICULTURE

On August 15, 2025, USDA has announced an urgent call for nominations to serve on the Tribal Advisory Committee, with four appointments to be made by Secretary Brooke Rollins and Ranking Member Angie Craig (D-MN-2) of the House Agriculture Committee. The committee advises USDA on Tribal and Indian Affairs, submitting annual reports to the Secretary and Congress. Nominations are open through September 22, 2025, and USDA encourages submissions from federally recognized Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and Tribal organizations with expertise in food, forestry, and agriculture. NNWO has forwarded the announcement to leadership for consideration and remains available to assist with nomination inquiries.

The Intertribal Agriculture Council announced its 2025 Annual Conference, to be held December 9-11 at Virgin Hotels Las Vegas. This signature event will convene tribal leaders, farmers, ranchers, youth, and entrepreneurs to explore market opportunities, share resources, and strengthen tribal food systems. Over three days, participants will gain access to tools for economic growth, sustainable practices, and rebuilding Indigenous food systems aligned with cultural values.

The Intertribal Timber Council, in partnership with the USDA Forest Service, will host a virtual listening session on September 25 (10:30 am–12 pm MT / 12:30–2 pm ET) to hear tribal priorities for future partnership opportunities. The session will cover updates on EO 14225, the Explore Act, and Secretarial Memo 1078-015, with discussion on shared stewardship, workforce capacity, timber infrastructure, and sustainable forest management. Tribal leaders, foresters, and partners are encouraged to attend. [Register here.](#)