FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Legislative Branch Threatens COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Distributions to Tribal Members

CARNEGIE, Okla. - The Executive Branch has been working diligently to direct emergency assistance payments to tribal members. Last week, the Executive Branch rolled out an 8-point general assistance plan specifically for tribal members to get the much-needed assistance quickly into their hands. The only requirement is that tribal members had to complete and file an application based on need. Also, an application processing center was established for this purpose in mind.

The money the tribe received from the US government CARES Act came with many restrictions that require the Tribe to follow many complicated rules. One of the things not allowed in the rules is a flat per capita payment to all tribal members. The Legislative Branch has been promoting a $1K payment to all tribal members. The Legislative Branch plans now to seek an injunction or restraining order to prevent the Executive Branch from helping as many people possible through the emergency assistance plan now in place. The Executive Branch plan does not align with the political objectives of certain Legislators.

The Legislators failed in their constitutional duty to review and modify the budget the Executive Branch submitted on time on January 30, 2020. They are attempting to force the issue with the sole objective of getting their hands on the CARES Act funding the tribe received through a Legislative process that circumvents constitutional requirements.

For the record, the Executive Branch has administered all grant funding that the Tribe receives from the government. The CARES Act funding is no different. This funding is considered financial assistance from the US government. The US government has taken the steps to assign a Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number which subjects these funds to annual single audit requirements and designates specific use of funds. These cannot be used for anything that appears or resembles a per capita payment. The Tribe must comply fully with those requirements. More importantly, this funding was provided by the US Treasury and is subject to monitoring by the Office of Inspector General. This office closely monitors the use of these funding for fraud, waste, and abuse. The tribe will avoid any misuse of these funds under the Tribal Chairman Matthew M. Komalty’s direction.

Chairman Komalty states, “The approach the legislators want to take is counter-intuitive. There is no real basis for their actions other than to correct a failure on their part to follow the constitution and a political strategy to make good on any promises they made to our constituents on the CARES Act funding. Their proposed legal action will tie up the money in court until the ruling comes down and if the judge accepts their arguments. We could be looking at many months of delays that make matters worse for our tribal members.”

In the meantime, our most vulnerable population will suffer at the hands of their miscalculations and political misdeeds. The Executive Branch will continue with its plans to properly spend the CARES Act funding by the guidance that has been provided by the US Treasury to the full benefit of the tribal membership. All tribal members are invited to visit the website to the US Treasury Department to read for themselves the guidance...
that has been provided in the use of these funds, [https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/cares/state-and-local-governments](https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/cares/state-and-local-governments). Please read the PDF files located at the bottom portion of the link.