



## News Release

For Immediate Release: June 7, 2019

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### **U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee Rejects Proposed Elimination of Scholarship Programs**

The Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance learned today that the U.S. House Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations rejected the Trump Administration's second attempt to eliminate the Higher Education Grant, which provides funds to the Navajo Nation through a P.L. 93-638 contract.

According to the report submitted with the Dept. of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2020, "The Committee recommends \$51,893,000 for Post-Secondary Programs, \$51,893,000 above the enacted level and \$50,673,000 above the budget request. The Committee rejects the proposed elimination of the scholarship programs and approves the internal transfer, as requested."

"We are grateful for the Committee's support of scholarship programs," said Rose Graham, ONNSFA director. "Elimination of the Higher Education Grant would drastically impact Navajo students. Thousands of students submit applications for scholarships each year. Only about half of those receive an award due to available funds."

Federal funds, provided through the Higher Education Grant to the Navajo Nation, made up more than 56 percent of the \$24.3 million awarded to students in 2018.

In 2018, the ONNSFA awarded a total of \$24,397,789 to 6,680 students including:

- Federal Funds (Higher Education Grant) – \$13,647,552 to 4,116 students
- Navajo Nation Funds – \$8,710,026 to 2,817 students
- Trust Funds – \$1,288,322 to 421 students
- Corporate Funds – \$741,889 to 400 students

Ms. Graham urged the Senate to also restore funding for the Higher Education Grant.

"The cost of higher education is a challenge for Navajo students," Ms. Graham said. "Many students would not be able to pursue a college degree or continue their studies without financial assistance provided through the Higher Education Grant. Higher education is a powerful force for change. We need to continue to make every effort to increase opportunities for students."

nical assistance and training based on the new law. With the remaining increased funds, the Committee directs BIE to provide funding to more tribes in order to assist more students.

*Post-Secondary Programs (forward funded).*—The Committee recommends \$121,696,000 for Post-Secondary Programs (forward funded), \$121,696,000 above the enacted level and \$24,886,000 above the budget request. The recommendation accepts the proposed internal transfers and includes estimated fixed costs, as requested.

*Tribal Colleges and Universities.*—Within the \$86,696,000 provided for Tribal Colleges and Universities, the Committee recommends \$63,886,000 for Title I activities, \$17,000,000 for Title II activities, \$109,000 for Title III activities, \$701,000 for technical assistance, and \$5,000,000 for tribal college and universities infrastructure improvements as authorized by 25 U.S.C. 1813.

*Post-Secondary Programs.*—The Committee recommends \$51,893,000 for Post-Secondary Programs, \$51,893,000 above the enacted level and \$50,673,000 above the budget request. The Committee rejects the proposed elimination of the scholarship programs and approves the proposed internal transfer, as requested.

The Committee directs BIE to complete annual health and safety inspections of all BIE system facilities and to publish quarterly updates on the status of such inspections.

*Education Management.*—The recommendation includes \$42,607,000 for Education Management, \$42,607,000 above the enacted level and \$5,000 above the budget request. The Committee includes the estimated fixed costs, as requested. Within the amounts provided, the Committee includes: \$32,300,000 for education program management activities, \$32,300,000 above the enacted level and equal to the budget request, and \$10,307,000 for education information technology, \$10,307,000 above the enacted level and \$5,000 above the budget request.

BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION CONSTRUCTION

Appropriation enacted, 2019 .....	\$0
Budget estimate, 2020 .....	68,858,000
Recommended, 2020 .....	387,252,000
Comparison:	
Appropriation, 2019 .....	+387,252,000
Budget estimate, 2020 .....	+318,394,000

The Committee accepts the budget proposal to establish BIE as an independent bureau with a separate budget structure, including a separate construction budget, from the BIA. The separation is reflected below.

The Committee recommends \$387,252,000 for BIE Construction, \$387,252,000 above the enacted level and \$318,394,000 above the budget request. The Committee rejects the proposed program eliminations and includes requested fixed costs. All subactivities and program elements presented in the budget estimate submitted to the Congress are continued at enacted levels and adjusted for requested fixed costs and transfers. None of the requested program changes are agreed to unless specifically addressed below. Recommended program changes, instructions, and details follow below and in the table at the end of this report. Additional instructions are included in the front of this report.