



## John McCain on Native American Policy

*"I believe the federal government has a special ethical and legal responsibility to help make the American dream accessible to Native Americans" ---John McCain*

Over the years John McCain has received the support and friendship of many people from Indian Country, and he is committed to ensuring that they are treated justly and fairly. As president, John McCain will continue to build on his record of achieving results for Indian Country, and will continue to do so through close consultation with the tribes.

John McCain believes in protecting tribal sovereignty and recognizes the unique government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes and the trust responsibility. He has twice proudly served as chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (1995-1997 and 2005-2007) and continues to be a member of the Committee. John McCain has been a leader in Congress by sponsoring legislation and enacting laws that help improve conditions on Indian reservations and strengthen the ability of tribal governments to provide essential programs and services. His 25-year record of Native American policy accomplishments include:

### ***Self Governance***

John McCain has long championed tribal self-governance, taking power out of the hands of Washington bureaucrats and placing it in the hands of tribal governments. He was a principal sponsor of the Tribal Self-Governance Act of 1994 (Title II, P.L. 103-413), which dramatically downsized the Federal-Indian bureaucracy. His efforts have led to greater self-sufficiency, more effective tribal governance and more efficient programs and services for Indian people living on reservations. John McCain's dedication to tribal self-determination will reinvigorate the policy of Tribal Self-Governance.

### ***Law Enforcement***

John McCain has worked tirelessly to strengthen law enforcement on reservations, including improving tribal courts and detention facilities. He has sponsored and moved legislation addressing the epidemic of methamphetamine in Indian Country (S. 85 [110th Congress] and S. 4113 [109<sup>th</sup> Congress]). John McCain was an early leader in addressing victim's rights, family violence and child abuse, by authoring legislation such as the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act (Title IV, P.L. 101-630). He also pushed for a pilot project for border tribes to help better secure our nation's borders.

### ***Health Care***

John McCain has worked to improve health care for Indians, including reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, championing efforts to combat diabetes, and supporting efforts to address chronic mental health and substance abuse problems on reservations. He has advocated for permanent self-governance authority for the Indian Health Service to enable Indian tribes to directly administer tribal health facilities and programs. John McCain authored legislation to increase attention to the unique and pressing health needs of Indian populations by designating an Assistant Secretary for Indian Health to prioritize and simplify health services within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

### ***Trust Resources and Economic Development***

The long history of misuse and abuse of Indian resources held in trust, coupled with unreasonable and unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles, has stifled new and expanded economic opportunities on reservations. John McCain fought to enact the American Indian Trust Management and Reform Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-412) and has sponsored legislation to help tribes protect both their natural and cultural resources and to reform the broken trust

system. He introduced the first comprehensive legislation to resolve longstanding litigation over trust accounts and reform the trust system, and, as president, will make comprehensive reform of the trust system and resolution of the trust accounting litigation a priority. He sponsored the Reservation Employment Tax Credit and the Accelerated Depreciation Allowance for reservation businesses and has consistently fought to protect the right of tribes to engage in gaming on Indian lands.

### ***Housing***

John McCain has worked to turn over authority and funding to Indian tribes for their direct management of housing programs, consistent with long-standing principles of Tribal Self-Determination and Self-Governance. He has supported Indian housing assistance programs under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act.

### ***Education***

Long before the No Child Left Behind Act, John McCain pushed for reforms to BIA schools and an increase in resources for tribal education programs. He fully understands that providing educational opportunities to our nation's Native American children is critical to preparing for productive livelihoods, including the preservation of native languages and cultural identity. John McCain will continue the BIA schools construction initiative, which has provided nearly \$1 billion for the construction of new schools and refurbishment of numerous others on reservations, and will provide the resources necessary to make those schools safe learning environments for Native American youth.

### ***Native Veterans***

John McCain has been very supportive of American Indian veterans, including championing many of the efforts to get the recognition deserved for the many Code Talkers who have proudly served our nation. He has led Congressional efforts to build the Native American Veterans' Memorial, and will continue his fight to honor our national commitment to our veterans, including Native Americans veterans, who have devoted their lives to ensuring our freedom.

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<b>Paid for by John McCain 2008</b>
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