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White House Tribal Nations Conference Must Be Followed with Immediate Action to Improve the Lives of Native Americans

President Obama should be applauded for hosting the White House Tribal Nations Conference today. As the Obama Administration moves forward, his promise of helping Native Americans should be met with concrete action that will effectively deliver opportunities on tribal lands across our country.

However, many of the Administration's current priorities will not improve the lives of Native Americans, including:

- **CARD CHECK**
 - The Obama Administration and Democrats in Congress have clearly expressed their commitment to passing Card Check legislation – without an exemption for tribal governments. This means that non-Indian labor unions would force their way into tribal businesses, schools, and medical clinics on Indian Reservations.

- **ENERGY JOBS AND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT**
 - President Obama's Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson ordered the cancellation of a permit for a Navajo Nation power plant that Navajo leadership called the most important development project the tribe has ever undertaken. This decision prevents the Navajo nation from creating new jobs and reducing its 42% unemployment rate.

 - The Obama Administration's Bureau of Indian Affairs is opposed to acquiring land in trust to facilitate development of an energy refinery to create new jobs in North Dakota.

- **SIDE-STEPPING DECISIONS THAT WOULD HELP TRIBES**
 - The Obama Administration has demonstrated that it is unlikely to review the National Labor Relations Board's decision to apply federal labor law to tribal governments. However, Republican Congressman John Kline introduced the *Tribal Labor Sovereignty Act of 2009* (H.R. 1395) to help resolve this issue.

- **HEALTH CARE**
 - Democrat Congressional Leaders have had nearly three years to reauthorize the Indian Health Care Improvement Reauthorization legislation. Unfortunately, Speaker Pelosi would not even bring it to the floor of the U.S.

House of Representatives for a vote. Instead, Democrats jammed this bill into the massive government-run healthcare bill. As Ranking Member Hastings recently [noted](#): *“Tying reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to the controversial government takeover of the nation’s health care does a serious disservice to Tribes and individual Indians and Alaska Natives across the country. Reauthorization should be permitted to move independently and not be tied to such a costly and controversial measure.”*

After the Tribal Nations conference concludes, the President must live up to his pledge to improve the lives of all Native Americans.

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