



# IAQ : Indigenous Affairs Quarterly

---

## Baltimore Yearly Meeting Indigenous Affairs Committee

Spring, 2026

If no one else is distributing the IAQ to your meeting – tag, you’re it! *Please share it!* You may forward it to your listserv, print copies to share, or whatever works. This IAQ and all the other editions are posted on the Indigenous Affairs Committee's website. Here is the shortened link to get you there: <https://bit.ly/3Ks8b8x>

### In the News

Each year, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) organizes a meeting of Tribal representatives in Washington, D.C. to hear presentations by members of Congress and Federal staff on matters of Indian policy. Native groups active in influencing government policy are also present.

This year, IAC member Susannah Rose attended the meeting to listen and learn about the issues affecting Native Americans. Congressional champions of Native Americans and Tribal representatives spoke of the disturbing failure of the current Administration to understand the difference between “Equality, Inclusion, and Diversity” initiatives, banned by Presidential order, and Trust obligations to Tribes, which stem from promises made by the Federal government in return for Indian land.

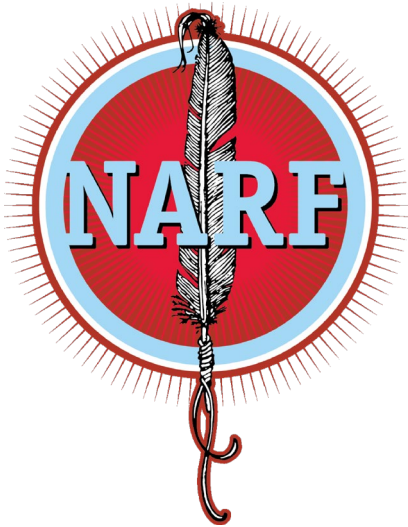
Native Americans occupy a unique place in the country as both citizens of the United States and often as citizens of sovereign Nations with their own Constitutions. Constant advocacy is needed to maintain trust obligations, which include support for education and health, as well as respect for Native rights as citizens of sovereign nations. So far, Congressional champions have successfully opposed the most serious cuts proposed in the President’s budget, but the battles continue. As savvy Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-WI) put it at the NCAI conference, “Y’all aren’t a race, y’all are *Nations!!!*”

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) stresses the importance of recognizing Native sovereignty and honoring trust responsibilities:

We call on the United States to uphold its federal trust responsibility to tribes by honoring treaty obligations, protecting and strengthening inherent tribal sovereignty,



protecting tribal lands held in trust, and providing for a prosperous future for tribal communities.



In a major setback for Native sovereign rights, the Supreme Court appears to have cleared the way for states to tax the income of members of Native tribes who live on reservations. Lyle Denniston, whose reportage has covered Supreme Court decisions for decades, discusses this disturbing decision here:

<https://lyldenlawnews.com/2026/04/06/major-setback-for-indian-rights/>

### **What We're Learning**

This year, the Tribal Supreme Court Project, jointly sponsored by NCAI and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The initiative was founded in 2001 after two devastating opinions by the U.S. Supreme Court that “struck devastating blows to tribal sovereignty and tribal jurisdiction -- the most fundamental elements of continued tribal existence and principles of federal Indian law.” The Project sought to increase the success of important cases before the Supreme Court. Staffed by a volunteer Working Group of over 300 attorneys, academics, and Tribal organization representatives from around the nation, the project has had remarkable success. When it began 2001, Tribal Nations were losing a historic low of 80% cases that went to the Supreme Court. With leadership from the project, in the last decade they have won 70% of their cases.

Learn more about this powerful initiative here: <https://www.sct.narf.org>

### **Resources**

Bill Mims, a member of IAC, recommends the First Nations version of the Psalms and Proverbs, as well as the First Nations version of the New Testament. The new translations were done by Natives seeking ways to tell the story of the Bible to Native North Americans in a culturally relevant way. Bill finds them both uplifting and readable. Here, for example, is the First Nations version of I Corinthians 13:4-8:

Love is patient and kind. Love is never jealous. It does not brag or boast. It is not puffed up or big-headed. Love does not act in shameful ways, nor does it care only about itself. It is not hotheaded, nor does it keep track of wrongs done to it. Love is not happy with lies and injustice, but truth makes its heart glad. Love keeps walking even when carrying a heavy load. Love keeps trusting, never loses hope, and stands firm in hard times. The road of love has no end.

Here is Matthew 5: 33-38:

You have heard the ancestors were told, “When you make a solemn promise, you must keep it to honor the Great Spirit.” But I say this to you, do not make any solemn promises. Do not say, “I promise by the spirit-world above,” for it is Creator’s seat of honor, or “I promise by the earth below,” which is the resting place for his feet. Or “I promise by Village of Peace (Jerusalem),” for it belongs to the Great Spirit Chief. Do not even say, “I promise by my own head.” Can you make even one hair on your head become white or black? Your simple “yes” or “no” is enough. To say more is to speak with a forked tongue like the evil trickster snake.

You can find the First Nations translations here, as well as from other sources:  
<https://firstnationsversion.com/book/first-nations-version/>

## **Special Events**



*Carlisle School Cemetery, 1937*

**May 23:** Each year, Natives and non-Natives join to decorate the graves of young Indians who perished at the Carlisle Boarding School. Some meet for breakfast at 9am at the Mountain Gate Restaurant in Thurmont, MD. We meet at the Cemetery at 11am, entering through the Carlisle Barracks Visitor Center at 870 Jim Thorpe Road in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. If you do not have a military ID, you need to go to the Carlisle Barracks Visitor page to make a reservation. Here is the link:

<https://www.armywarcollege.edu/visitorcenter/visitors.cfm>

This time of year is perfect for powwows, and powwows are a perfect family activity. You can find what is happening near you at <https://www.powwows.com>. For example:

**June 27 – 28:** Pow Wow in Parsons, West Virginia.

<https://www.fiverivercampground.com/powwow-in-parsons.html>

**July 4:** Cheroenhaka (Nottoway) “Green Corn” Pow Wow in Courtland, Virginia.

<https://calendar.powwows.com/events/cheroenhaka-nottoway-indian-tribe-green-corn-pow-wow/>

**July 18-19:** Whispering Winds powwow at Howard County, Maryland

Fairgrounds. <https://www.visithowardcounty.com/event/the-32nd-annual-whispering-winds-pow-wow-at-howard-county-fairgrounds/23456/>

## **Opportunities to Partner**

The Native American Legislative Update is a monthly newsletter from the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). To learn about the most important developments on Capitol Hill that affect Indian country and take action to protect sovereignty and maintain our trust obligations, sign up here: <https://www.fcnl.org/issues/native-americans>