

(3) Congress, through statutes, treaties, and the exercise of administrative authorities, has recognized the self-determination, self-reliance, and inherent sovereignty of Indian tribes;

(4) Indian tribes possess the inherent authority to establish their own form of government, including tribal justice systems;

(5) tribal justice systems are an essential part of tribal governments and serve as important forums for ensuring public health and safety and the political integrity of tribal governments;

(6) Congress and the Federal courts have repeatedly recognized tribal justice systems as the appropriate forums for the adjudication of disputes affecting personal and property rights;

(7) traditional tribal justice practices are essential to the maintenance of the culture and identity of Indian tribes and to the goals of this chapter;

(8) tribal justice systems are inadequately funded, and the lack of adequate funding impairs their operation; and

(9) tribal government involvement in and commitment to improving tribal justice systems is essential to the accomplishment of the goals of this chapter.

(Pub. L. 103-176, §2, Dec. 3, 1993, 107 Stat. 2004.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 103-176, §1, Dec. 3, 1993, 107 Stat. 2004, provided that: "This Act [enacting this chapter] may be cited as the 'Indian Tribal Justice Act'."

§ 3602. Definitions

For purposes of this chapter:

(1) The term "Bureau" means the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior.

(2) The term "Courts of Indian Offenses" means the courts established pursuant to part 11 of title 25, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) The term "Indian tribe" means any Indian tribe, band, nation, pueblo, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native entity, which administers justice under its inherent authority or the authority of the United States and which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indian tribes because of their status as Indians.

(4) The term "judicial personnel" means any judge, magistrate, court counselor, court clerk, court administrator, bailiff, probation officer, officer of the court, dispute resolution facilitator, or other official, employee, or volunteer within the tribal justice system.

(5) The term "Office" means the Office of Tribal Justice Support within the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

(6) The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

(7) The term "tribal organization" means any organization defined in section 5304(l) of this title.

(8) The term "tribal justice system" means the entire judicial branch, and employees

thereof, of an Indian tribe, including (but not limited to) traditional methods and forums for dispute resolution, lower courts, appellate courts (including intertribal appellate courts), alternative dispute resolution systems, and circuit rider systems, established by inherent tribal authority whether or not they constitute a court of record.

(Pub. L. 103-176, §3, Dec. 3, 1993, 107 Stat. 2004.)

SUBCHAPTER I—TRIBAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS

§ 3611. Office of Tribal Justice Support

(a) Establishment

There is hereby established within the Bureau the Office of Tribal Justice Support. The purpose of the Office shall be to further the development, operation, and enhancement of tribal justice systems and Courts of Indian Offenses.

(b) Transfer of existing functions and personnel

All functions performed before December 3, 1993, by the Branch of Judicial Services of the Bureau and all personnel assigned to such Branch as of December 3, 1993, are hereby transferred to the Office of Tribal Justice Support. Any reference in any law, regulation, executive order, reorganization plan, or delegation of authority to the Branch of Judicial Services is deemed to be a reference to the Office of Tribal Justice Support.

(c) Functions

In addition to the functions transferred to the Office pursuant to subsection (b), the Office shall perform the following functions:

(1) Provide funds to Indian tribes and tribal organizations for the development, enhancement, and continuing operation of tribal justice systems.

(2) Provide technical assistance and training, including programs of continuing education and training for personnel of Courts of Indian Offenses.

(3) Study and conduct research concerning the operation of tribal justice systems.

(4) Promote cooperation and coordination among tribal justice systems and the Federal and State judiciary systems.

(5) Oversee the continuing operations of the Courts of Indian Offenses.

(6) Provide funds to Indian tribes and tribal organizations for the continuation and enhancement of traditional tribal judicial practices.

(d) No imposition of standards

Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed or construed to authorize the Office to impose justice standards on Indian tribes.

(e) Assistance to tribes

(1) The Office shall provide technical assistance and training to any Indian tribe or tribal organization upon request. Technical assistance and training shall include (but not be limited to) assistance for the development of—

(A) tribal codes and rules of procedure;

(B) tribal court administrative procedures and court records management systems;

(C) methods of reducing case delays;