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HOEVEN: TREASURY ANNOUNCES INITIAL ALLOCATION FROM \$8 BILLION OF HISTORIC CARES ACT FUNDS TO INDIAN COUNTRY

May 5, 2020

WASHINGTON – Senator John Hoeven (R-ND), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (SCIA), today issued the following statement on the announcement by the U.S. Department of the Treasury that it will allocate 60 percent of the \$8 billion from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to assist tribes with COVID-19 relief efforts.

“We worked hard to secure these funds for tribal communities as part of the CARES Act and we appreciate Secretary Mnuchin and his team for working to distribute this initial payment of \$4.8 billion in tribal relief funds, the largest ever direct federal payment to Indian Tribes,” **said Hoeven**. “I encourage both Secretary Mnuchin and Interior Secretary Bernhardt to continue their outreach with the Tribes as they work to distribute the remaining dollars within the Relief Fund. I appreciate the important work that has been

completed thus far in providing direct assistance to mitigate, prevent, and respond to COVID-19 across the country. We must continue working together to respond to and defeat the coronavirus.”

Coronavirus Relief Fund Allocation Requirements

The CARES Act allocated \$8 billion for payments to Indian Tribes. With the newly allocated funds, the CARES Act mandates that the Relief Fund dollars will be used to cover:

- Necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19;
- Expenditures that were not accounted for in the most recently approved budget, as of the date of enactment of this section for the State or Tribal government; and
- Expenditures incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on December 30, 2020.

In an effort to ensure tribal input was included in the distribution of relief funds, the U.S. Departments of the Treasury and the Interior held multiple consultation sessions with Indian Tribes prior to the allocation.

As Chairman of SCIA, Hoeven worked with his Senate colleagues, including Senators Martha McSally and Steve Daines, to ensure these relief funds were available to provide direct assistance to mitigate, prevent, and respond to the impacts of COVID-19. Hoeven recently held a video conference with North Dakota tribal leaders and Administration officials to discuss the importance of quickly implementing the CARES Act in tribal communities.

Under the population distribution formula released by Treasury, North Dakota Tribes will

receive approximately \$109 million in funds to combat COVID-19:

- Spirit Lake Nation: \$12 million
- Standing Rock Sioux Tribe: \$21 million
- MHA Nation (Three Affiliated Tribes): \$17 million
- Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate: \$15 million
- Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians: \$44 million

According to the formula released by Treasury, Indian Tribes will receive 60% of the \$8 billion based on the population count under HUD's Indian Housing Block Grant Formula. Distribution of the remaining \$3.2 billion will be weighted between employees the Tribe employed prior to the COVID-19 epidemic and the expenses incurred since March 2020. Treasury will be sending out further guidance on this distribution at a future date.

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