

Department of the Interior Tribal Consultation

Director's remarks as prepared for delivery

June 20, 2023

- Good afternoon, everyone. It's an honor to be here.
- I'd like to begin my remarks with something I say whenever we meet with tribal representatives: Our work together is of the highest priority. And our goal is to strengthen our government-to-government relationships with all tribes.
- Now, this is important because we're public servants, and that includes serving all tribal nations.
- We serve you. And our service is that of providing statistical data to help you understand your people—who you are, your challenges, your accomplishments, and your needs. This helps you make informed decisions on how to improve your communities.
- Tribal consultations are a critical way we serve you. We look to your wisdom, to your suggestions and concerns. This input helps us improve your data—the data we provide to you as part of our mission.
- Today is your opportunity to provide us with feedback so that we can better fulfill your data needs. We need to hear you in the way that you're best able to offer feedback.
- We're also hoping you can help us gather feedback from your staff who work with census data. We want to hear from them, too.
- We very much appreciate the feedback we received at tribal consultations when we planned our 2020 Census data products. And now, staff at the U.S. Census Bureau have begun preparing for the 2030 Census. But we can't plan and conduct this census alone. We need to hear your voices. You see, your feedback leads to better, more inclusive data. We look forward to future tribal consultations on the 2030 Census as we continue our planning.
- We're very pleased that Assistant Secretary Newland reached out to the Census Bureau last fall. The objective was to advance the work of our Indian Country Data Working Group.
- He also promoted collaboration with other federal partners in a tribal consultation on data priorities. And here we are! For our part, we're addressing the working group's data priorities related to improving data quality and integration.
- The Census Bureau and the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs have revised our previous Memorandum of Understanding. We'll be signing the new version very soon. The agreement seeks to improve data on American Indian and Alaska Natives with regard to geographic boundaries and data dissemination.
- Through our collaboration, we'll better meet your needs by producing more timely, useful statistics on the people of Indian country.
- Returning to our tribal consultation, today is about you. We look forward to a continued partnership with you. And we'll be listening to your words closely.
- Thank you again for joining us, and I'll turn the floor back to our Tracy.