

Indian Law and Order Commission

January 11, 2012

Bobby Etsitty, Captain
Navajo Police Training Academy-Navajo Police
Navajo Nation

Greetings;

Empowering Tribal Law Enforcement Agencies and Tribal Governments

As a member of tribal police officers, I have seen the progress made in the number of years that I have worked for our department. From the appointment of tribal police officers without any formalize training to our current requirements of meeting not only Bureau of Indian Affairs law enforcement standards but including state post training standards. This effort would not be possible without collaboration and consultation with our counter parts at the state and federal level.

We will continue to ensure we provide training through our efforts with state and federal resources, there has been provided since the enactment of TLOA.

Certainly, raising the age limit to 47 for appointment to police officer position increases our effort in recruiting from array of dynamic backgrounds of individuals willing to serve the local communities. Of course, we will still require professional standards are met to make our department better and the best.

The mechanism to commission tribal law enforcement officers as federal law enforcement officers are beneficial to the enforcement of federal laws on our Nation, we have experience this limited enforcement authority before through the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Special Law Enforcement Commission. We are again currently going through the process of applying for the Special Law Enforcement Commission cards but the paper work and certain requirements are prolonging the intent of Tribal Law and Order Act.

The Tribal Law and Order Commission should continue to make adjustments and modification on tribal law enforcement officers becoming "federal law enforcements officers."

Since the Enactment of Tribal Law and Order Act, I have seen an increase on the attention of illegal drug transactions and its prosecution on the Nation; it needs to continue with the federal and state assistance to minimize its effect on the youth of our Nation and safety for all communities. Federal funding for training our officers and grants to purchase necessary equipment needs to continue to empower our Nation.

Page two
Indian Law and Order Commission
January 11, 2012

Our Nation's law enforcement program has been fortunate to have access to the national criminal information databases for a number of years through our state system, particular NCIC. We have also provided crime information through our contracting federal program to the national level. However, we are not at the same level as the state in as far as technology necessary to provide immediate service on statistics and alerts.

I know our officers are thankful for the tribal court sentencing authority to impose longer sentences and increase in fines. With the limited jail space, officers are frustrated seeing the same offenders back in the community and creating more havoc; it also diminishes the respect for authority. The Nation is fortunate to have new corrections facilities being build and additional facilities being plan for the future, the Commission is encouraged to advocate for funding to increase staff in our corrections and meeting communities need in Indian Country by increasing number of law enforcement officers.

In conclusion, progress is being made for our future generations so they can enjoy the quality of life and safety for all the communities in Indian Country. We appreciate the work and efforts being made by the Indian Law and Order Commission.

Thank you.