

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
MARCH 20, 2013
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Re: Office of Native Affairs and Policy 2012 Annual Report

I would like to thank Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico for joining us, and welcome all the Tribal leaders who are here today working to extend communications services to Tribal communities when it is so desperately needed, and where it can do so much good.

I know many of you are here not only to support the great work the Office of Native Affairs and Policy (ONAP) has done, but as part of the Native Nations Broadband Task Force, and I want to thank you for your work. This Task Force has been critically important in helping us renew our policy agenda for Indian Country and revitalize our Tribal consultation and training program.

In particular, I would like to welcome Task Force members Matthew Rantanen of the Southern California Tribal Digital Village, Peal Mikulski of Kewarak in Nome, Alaska, and Howard Brown of the Tulalip Tribes. Each of these Task Force members played a key role in helping us in our consultation and training efforts last year in their respective regions of Indian Country.

The Commission's relationship with Tribal Nations has grown very strong over the past few years.

As the Executive Director of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe Economic Development Authority wrote to me after meeting with our ONAP team: "I came away believing... most importantly that we have high level knowledgeable and helpful friends at the FCC, who are genuine, and concerned about our success."

Specifically, since the creation of the Office of Native Affairs and Policy in 2010 and the launch of a new regulatory agenda on Native Nations Day 2011, we have established a strong connection with Indian Country that ensures Tribal issues are of critical concern in every major rulemaking proceeding.

This connection has been both broad and deep. Since the creation of ONAP, the Commission has touched over 400 Tribal Nations.

ONAP has met with leaders of hundreds of Tribal Nations and visited 42 reservations, including many in places the Commission had never gone before: places like the Native Village of Noatak, 100 miles north of the Arctic Circle and accessible only by air; Micmac and Maliseet lands in northernmost Maine; and, Karuk, Hoopa, and Yurok lands on the Klamath River in Northern California.

We held 6 regional consultation and training seminars in fiscal year 2012, three times more than in any prior year, with four of them in places where we had never done outreach. These training sessions were attended by representatives of over 120 Tribes.

We heard from Tribes across the country that these sessions were light years ahead of previous efforts in their sophistication and engagement. These consultation and training sessions have become a hallmark of the Commission's efforts to exercise its nation-to-nation relationship with Tribes.

The unique relationship we have developed has presented multiple opportunities to address the lack of services on Tribal lands.

Building on the success of the Mobility Fund last year, which was the first ever use of a reverse auction for universal service support, I am pleased to announce that the Commission is moving ahead with our second USF auction, which will dedicate \$50 million to expanding mobile service on Tribal lands.

I am also pleased that the Commission was able to provide the first full power Tribal commercial FM allotments, one in New Mexico, which I mentioned earlier, and a second for the Hualapai Tribe, in Peach Springs, Arizona.

A theme running through all of our work is the involvement of Tribal Nations themselves in developing the solutions. Tribal Nations have not always had a seat at the table. But the full involvement of Tribal Nations is now recognized as key to unlocking the digital divide on their lands.

The credit for creating these opportunities is due to the work of individuals throughout Congress, the Commission, and beyond, but particularly the leadership of our ONAP team, and I thank them for their efforts.

The work is not done, and I look forward to working in concert both with Tribal Nations and the industry to create greater opportunities and incentives for Native communities.