

September 13, 2012

VIA EMAIL (COMMENTS@INDIAN.SENATE.GOV),
AND FAX (MAJORITY: 202-228-2589; MINORITY: 202-224-5429)

Hon. Daniel Akaka, Chairman
Hon. John Barrasso, Vice Chairman
Committee on Indian Affairs
United States Senate
838 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Nomination of Kevin Washburn for Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs

Dear Mr. Chairman and Mr. Vice Chairman:

We are former United States Attorneys in Republican administrations who care about the significant challenges in public safety and criminal justice on Indian reservations. The problems are serious and the challenges are severe. During our time in office as our District's chief federal law enforcement officer, each of us spent significant time trying to improve the lives of Indian people by working to insure that the United States was effective in prosecuting crimes in Indian country.

During that time, we became acquainted with the work of Professor, now Dean, Kevin Washburn, who has been nominated to the post of Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs at the Department of the Interior. While each of us may not fully agree with every position that Dean Washburn has taken as a professor, he has shown a very strong commitment to improving the public safety of people in Indian country, a commitment which we share and support.

Dean Washburn is a former violent crime prosecutor in the United States Attorney's Office in New Mexico, but he has also spent significant time in several states with large Indian reservations (Arizona, Minnesota and New Mexico) and has become aware of the different challenges faced in different contexts in Indian country throughout the United States. He has also served at Main Justice in Washington, D.C., and at the National Indian Gaming Commission, also in Washington. Few people have his breadth of experience in general issues of law enforcement and criminal justice in Indian country.

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Dean Washburn has written numerous articles on the subject and has worked for more than a decade with United States Attorneys of both parties through the Native American Issues Subcommittee of the Attorney General's Advisory Committee. He has also engaged in research funded through the National Institute of Justice at the Department of Justice and testified before Congressional committees. In addition, he worked toward the drafting and passage of the Tribal law and Order Act, and has testified frequently before and advised the Indian Law and Order Commission which was spawned from that Act.

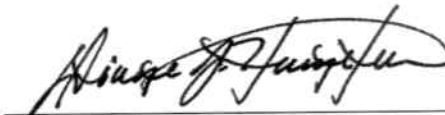
Public safety in Indian country is not a partisan issue, but an issue that all of us face. We believe that Dean Washburn could make positive contributions to meeting our responsibility to improve criminal justice for some of our most vulnerable populations in the United States. We urge you to confirm his nomination to the position of Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs as swiftly as possible, so that he may apply his skills and experience without significant delay to the challenging task of improving public safety in Indian country.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Thomas B. Heffelfinger
U. S. Attorney, District of Minnesota
1991-1993 and 2001-2006
Chair, Native American Issues
Subcommittee 2001-2006



Diane J. Humetewa
U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona
2007-2009

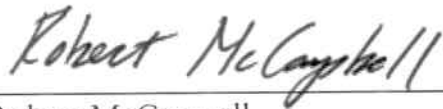
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Troy A. Eid
U. S. Attorney, District of Colorado
2006-2009



Philip N. Hogen
U. S. Attorney, District of South Dakota
1981-1991
Chair, Native American Issues
Subcommittee 1985-1991



Robert McCampell
U. S. Attorney, Western District of
Oklahoma, 2001-2005

cc: Committee Members (via fax):
Hon. Maria Cantwell (WA) (202-228-0514)
Hon. Kent Conrad (ND) (202-224-7776)
Hon. Michael Crapo (ID) (202-228-1375)
Hon. Al Franken (MN) (202-224-1152)
Hon. John Hoeven (ND) (202-224-7999)
Hon. Daniel Inouye (HI) (202-224-6747)
Hon. Mike Johanns (NE) (202-224-5213)
Hon. Tim Johnson (SD) (202-228-5765)
Hon. John McCain (AZ) (202-228-2862)
Hon. Lisa Murkowski (AK) (202-224-5301)
Hon. Jon Tester (MT) (202-224-8594)
Hon. Tom Udall (NM) (202-228-3261)

and other interested Senators:

Hon. Amy Klobuchar (MN) (202) 228-2186
Hon. Jon Kyl (AZ) (202-224-2207)
Hon. Michael Bennet (CO) (202-224-1933)
Hon. Mark Udall (CO) (202-224-6471)
Hon. John Thune (SD) (202-228-5429)
Hon. Tom Coburn (OK) (202-224-6008)
Hon. James M. Inhofe (OK) (202-228-0380)
Hon. Jeff Bingaman (NM) (202-224-2852)