

§ 3651. Findings

The Congress finds and declares that—

(1) there is a government-to-government relationship between the United States and Indian tribes;

(2) Indian tribes are sovereign entities and are responsible for exercising governmental authority over Indian lands;

(3) the rate of violent crime committed in Indian country is approximately twice the rate of violent crime committed in the United States as a whole;

(4) in any community, a high rate of violent crime is a major obstacle to investment, job creation and economic growth;

(5) tribal justice systems are an essential part of tribal governments and serve as important forums for ensuring the health and safety and the political integrity of tribal governments;

(6) Congress and the Federal courts have repeatedly recognized tribal justice systems as the most appropriate forums for the adjudication of disputes affecting personal and property rights on Native lands;

(7) enhancing tribal court systems and improving access to those systems serves the dual Federal goals of tribal political self-determination and economic self-sufficiency;

(8) there is both inadequate funding and an inadequate coordinating mechanism to meet the technical and legal assistance needs of tribal justice systems and this lack of adequate technical and legal assistance funding impairs their operation;

(9) tribal court membership organizations have served a critical role in providing training and technical assistance for development and enhancement of tribal justice systems;

(10) Indian legal services programs, as funded partially through the Legal Services Corporation, have an established record of providing cost effective legal assistance to Indian people in tribal court forums, and also contribute significantly to the development of tribal courts and tribal jurisprudence; and

(11) the provision of adequate technical assistance to tribal courts and legal assistance to both individuals and tribal courts is an essential element in the development of strong tribal court systems.

(Pub. L. 106-559, § 2, Dec. 21, 2000, 114 Stat. 2778.)

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 106-559, § 1, Dec. 21, 2000, 114 Stat. 2778, provided that: "This Act [enacting this chapter and amending section 3621 of this title and sections 1629e and 1629g of Title 43, Public Lands] may be cited as the 'Indian Tribal Justice Technical and Legal Assistance Act of 2000'."

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR COURTS OR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS OF CERTAIN TRIBES OR VILLAGES

Pub. L. 108-199, div. B, title I, § 112(a)(1), Jan. 23, 2004, 118 Stat. 62, which prohibited use of funds provided in div. B of Pub. L. 108-199 or on or after Jan. 23, 2004, for courts or law enforcement officers for a tribe or village in which fewer than 25 Native members live in the village year round or that is located within certain areas, was repealed by Pub. L. 111-211, title II, § 247(e)(1), July 29, 2010, 124 Stat. 2297.

§ 3652. Purposes

The purposes of this chapter are as follows:

(1) to carry out the responsibility of the United States to Indian tribes and members of Indian tribes by ensuring access to quality technical and legal assistance.

(2) To strengthen and improve the capacity of tribal court systems that address civil and criminal causes of action under the jurisdiction of Indian tribes.

(3) To strengthen tribal governments and the economies of Indian tribes through the enhancement and, where appropriate, development of tribal court systems for the administration of justice in Indian country by providing technical and legal assistance services.

(4) To encourage collaborative efforts between national or regional membership organizations and associations whose membership consists of judicial system personnel within tribal justice systems; non-profit entities which provide legal assistance services for Indian tribes, members of Indian tribes, and/or tribal justice systems.

(5) To assist in the development of tribal judicial systems by supplementing prior congressional efforts such as the Indian Tribal Justice Act [25 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.] (Public Law 103-176).

(Pub. L. 106-559, § 3, Dec. 21, 2000, 114 Stat. 2779.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original "this Act", meaning Pub. L. 106-559, Dec. 21, 2000, 114 Stat. 2778, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 3651 of this title and Tables.

The Indian Tribal Justice Act, referred to in par. (5), is Pub. L. 103-176, Dec. 3, 1993, 107 Stat. 2004, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 38 (§ 3601 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 3601 of this title and Tables.

§ 3653. Definitions

For purposes of this chapter:

(1) Attorney General

The term "Attorney General" means the Attorney General of the United States.

(2) Director

The term "Director" means the Director of the Office of Tribal Justice.

(3) Indian lands

The term "Indian lands" shall include lands within the definition of "Indian country", as defined in section 1151 of title 18; or "Indian reservations", as defined in section 1452(d) of this title, or section 1903(10) of this title. For purposes of the preceding sentence, such section 1452(d) of this title shall be applied by treating the term "former Indian reservations in Oklahoma" as including only lands which are within the jurisdictional area of an Oklahoma Indian Tribe (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior) and are recognized by such Secretary as eligible for trust land status under part 151 of title 25, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on December 21, 2000).