

JON'S WORK TO IMPROVE NATIVE EDUCATION

PROBLEM: School Repairs

Funding for native school repairs has decreased by 76% over the past decade. Of the 183 BIE schools across the country, 58 are listed in poor condition. And 83% of tribal colleges and universities need more student housing facilities, 74% need more classrooms, and 70% need job training facilities.

SOLUTION: S. 2468 - Safe Academic Facilities and Environments for Tribal Youth (SAFETY) Act

That's why Jon introduced the SAFETY Act, to help tribes repair their schools and ensure native students have the resources they need to succeed. The SAFETY Act would provide native schools with funding so they could upgrade their classrooms, build new teacher and student housing, and maintain science labs and job training facilities. Jon knows we can't prepare our students for the 21st century economy in deteriorating 20th century facilities.

PROBLEM: Afterschool Programs

When asked, at least 40 percent of Native American parents said they are unable to enroll their children in afterschool programs because they are too expensive. This is a shame because, in some cases, afterschool programs have helped increase Native American students reach graduation rates percent of nearly 90 percent.

SOLUTION: S. 1745 - Extracurricular Programs for Indian Children (EPIC) Act of 2015

That's why Jon introduced the EPIC Act, which would help Indian tribes and tribal entities fund after-school and summer school activities for children in their communities. The bill would also provide Native youth with access to mentors, nutritional meals, and safe and usable classrooms and playgrounds. Jon believes students thrive when given equal educational opportunities and a safe space to explore their cultural and academic interests.

PROBLEM: Native Languages

Of the almost 150 Native languages that are still spoken in the United States today, every single one of them is likely to go extinct in the next 50-100 years if actions aren't taken to preserve them.

SOLUTION: S. 1419 - Native Language Immersion Student Achievement (NLISA) Act

That's why Jon introduced the NLISA Act, which provides funding to create, improve, and expand Native language learning programs. The Act, which was passed into law last year, allows the Department of Education to give tribes, native schools, nonprofits, and other organizations grants to help start or improve programs that teach and preserve native languages. It is a fact, Native American students do better in school and are more likely to graduate.

U.S. SENATOR FOR MONTANA

JON TESTER

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PROBLEM: Teachers

The number of unfilled full-time teaching positions at BIE and locally-run public schools that serve Indian reservations has climbed over the past few years. Yet, nationwide, Native teachers make up less than 0.5 percent of the teacher workforce

SOLUTION :

S. 1928 - Native Educator Support and Training (NEST) Act

That's why Jon introduced the NEST Act, which would help recruit and retain more Native teachers for Indian Country by establishing new scholarships, student loan forgiveness plans, and professional development opportunities for teachers who commit to working at school located on an Indian reservation or a BIE school. As a former teacher, Jon knows the importance of investing in those teachers who invest in their students and communities

PROBLEM: Nutrition

More than 30 million students nationwide receive a free or reduced-price school lunch each day. However, 85% of these students, who get free or reduced-price school lunch during the school year, do not get any nutrition assistance over the summer.

SOLUTION:

S. 1937 - Tribal Nutrition Improvement (TNI) Act of 2015

That's why Jon introduced the TNI Act, which would remove the barriers that are keeping tribes from accessing federal nutrition assistance funds. Jon's bill gives tribes control over the same nutrition assistance programs other schools receive. Tribes know best when it comes to the needs of their children and families, so giving them control over these programs allows them to administer healthy meals to those who most need it.

PROBLEM: Early Childhood Ed

Children who do not participate in early childhood education are 25% more likely to drop out of school and 60% more likely to never attend college. Native American kindergartners are more likely to be held back than any other peer group, and Native American students have the lowest high school graduation rates in the nation.

SOLUTION:

S. 2304 - Tribal Early Childhood, Education & Related Services Integration (TECERSI) Act

That's why Jon introduced the TECERSI Act, which would allow tribes to redesign and run federal early childhood programs in a way that makes better sense for their children and communities. Jon's bill also reduces bureaucratic red tape for tribal grantees and provides funding for childcare center construction and early childhood teacher development. Tribes know what's best for their kids, and Jon wants to make sure federal red tape doesn't stand in their way.