



Indian Country Priorities and Opportunities for the 2018 Farm Bill *Title IX: Energy*

Key Points and Recommendations

- Tribal lands, individual Indian-owned land, and natural resources hold immense potential to develop bio-based energy economic development, energy infrastructure build-outs, and jobs in tribal communities and surrounding rural communities.
- Establish a Tribal Bio-Based Energy Development Grant Program to help tribal governments, tribal producers, and tribal business entities develop bio-energy businesses and production.

Background Information and Context

Energy projects in Indian Country hold immense potential for diversifying tribal economies while bringing essential energy infrastructure to remote communities. Growing crops for energy purposes or converting natural resources on tribal and individual Indian-owned lands to bio-energy projects is an important tool for economic development and self-sufficiency. The 2018 Farm Bill can further support tribal bio-energy projects focused on remote tribal food producers who embrace the importance of research and development of products and systems. This will help tribes reach their energy production and infrastructure goals and support surrounding rural communities in need of affordable energy, jobs, and economic development.

Opportunities for Indian Country in the Energy Title

Establish a Tribal Bio-Based Energy Development Grant Program

- Create a Tribal Bio-Based Energy Development Grant Program in the 2018 Farm Bill to help spark economic development and energy infrastructure development in tribal communities, while providing low-cost energy to tribal communities and surrounding rural areas. This grant program for tribal governments and wholly owned tribal entities would operate much like a grant in lieu of tax credit, similar to the existing Renewable Energy Production Incentive (REPI) Program. Further, the Tribal Bio-Based Energy Development Grant Program should specify the eligibility of tribally chartered and federally chartered tribal corporations for rural development programs, including for grants and loan programs, as well as any technical assistance programs available. Since the U.S. Department of Agriculture has made a policy statement that it will recognize federally chartered Section 17 Tribal Corporations as eligible entities for rural development programs, the program should codify this and clarify that tribally chartered tribal corporations are also eligible.

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