

THE MARKUP

POLICY BRIEF WITH COLBY DUREN

“The Markup” is IAC’s new weekly policy brief update to keep Indian Country in the loop on what is going on in the Washington, D.C. beltway. A “markup” is when a congressional committee meets to offer changes, amendments, and to debate legislation, and we hope the information provided in the IAC Markup policy brief will provide the same opportunity for knowledge sharing and involvement in the process.

The Markup – 1/15/2021 Update

Since this is the first update, I’d like to introduce myself to those of you who I haven’t met before, and talk about the exciting policy work we’re expanding at the IAC. I joined the IAC in mid-November 2020 as Director of Policy and Government Affairs to build on the more than 30 years of policy work and to help establish a permanent presence in Washington, D.C. for the IAC membership, Native Farm Bill Coalition, and to support tribal leaders and tribal producers public issues education and advocacy regarding Indian Country food and agriculture law and policy. Please do not hesitate to reach out if there is anything we can do to help, my email is colby@indianag.org.

End of 2020 Policy Wrap-Up

Starting at the end of November 2020, the IAC developed and shared a letter with the incoming Biden-Harris Administration highlighting immediate Day One and First 100 Days actions to support tribal producers and tribal governments access to both the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Department of the Interior programs and funding. IAC’s immediate action priorities can be found here: [IAC Priorities for Biden-Harris Administration](#)

On December 11, 2020, IAC Executive Director Zach Ducheneaux issued a statement of support for the nomination of Secretary Tom Vilsack to the appointment: [IAC Statement Supporting the Nomination of Sec. Vilsack](#)

That same day, the IAC sent a letter to the Biden-Harris Team supporting Janie Simms Hipp to be nominated to serve as Deputy Secretary of USDA with Secretary Vilsack. IAC’s letter can be found here: [IAC Letter Supporting Janie Hipp for USDA Dep. Secretary](#)

Additionally, with the historic nomination of Rep. Deb Haaland to serve as the next Secretary of Interior, the IAC sent a letter to the Biden Transition team supporting her nomination and acknowledging this important moment: [IAC Letter Supporting Rep. Haaland for DOI Secretary](#)

For more information, please contact:

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End of Year COVID-19 Emergency Relief Legislation

Before the end of the year, Congress passed omnibus legislation providing full appropriations funding for the federal government for the 2021 fiscal year and a COVID-19 relief package with more than \$900 billion in funding in response to the continuing pandemic. The relief package includes \$26 billion to support agriculture producers and food programs and an extension of time for tribes and states to spend the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund until December 31, 2021. Here's IAC's Policy Brief on breaking down the USDA funding levels: [IAC Brief on C4 Emergency COVID-19 Relief Package](#)

Looking forward in early 2021 Policy

A new Congress was seated on January 3, 2021, starting the process of the 117th Congress setting its priorities, rules, accepting the results of the electoral college, and beginning the process of reviewing and confirming the nominations of President-elect Joe Biden to serve in his administration after his inauguration on January 20, 2021.

However, in the wake of the riots and insurrection in Washington, D.C. on the Capitol building, the focus has shifted to Impeachment proceedings. On Wednesday, the House of Representatives voted to impeach President Trump by a vote of 232-197, and is scheduled to take up the impeachment trial in the next few weeks, which could impact the timing and approval of President-elect Biden's nominations.

FDPIR 638 Pilot Program Accepting Proposals

On Thursday, USDA Food and Nutrition Service announced the process for submitting proposals from tribes and tribal organizations for the 638 self-determination local procurement pilot project is now open. Proposals will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. ET on March 15, 2021.

The 638 FDPIR pilot project was established in the 2018 Farm Bill through the work of Native Farm Bill Coalition and its members. For more information on the application process, visit the [Federal Register notice](#).

