



Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Proposed regulations to implement the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (P.L. 93-638) are being published September 4 in the Federal Register, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morris Thompson announced today.

There will be 30 days after publication for comments from interested parties.

"Because this legislation is so important to Indian people," Commissioner Thompson said, "there has been very extensive consultation with the Indian community in the development of these regulations. Final regulations will be published November 4, so we are hoping that Indian leaders will utilize this opportunity to comment to make the regulations the best possible."

The Act was signed by President Ford January 4, 1975. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, together with the Indian Health Service, held more than 30 consultation sessions (April through June) with Indian groups throughout the country to discuss the Act and a draft of regulations. Recommendations made in these meetings were incorporated into draft regulations mailed to all tribal leaders and heads of Indian organizations in August. The published regulations and a paper describing the Bureau's philosophy and procedures for development of the regulations will be mailed to these same leaders.

The first part of the Act gives Indian tribes increased opportunities to govern their own affairs. It directs the Secretary of the Interior (and his delegate the Commissioner of Indian Affairs) to contract with the tribes or tribal organizations for the operation of reservation programs, upon request from the tribe.

This part also provides for grants to strengthen tribal governmental capabilities, waivers of Federal contracting requirements and the use of Federal employees in tribal programs under certain conditions.

The second part of the Act deals with assistance to non-Federal schools serving Indian students. It authorizes funding for construction of needed school facilities for public and tribally-operated schools and amends the Johnson-O'Malley Act of 1934. It stresses the role of the tribal governing bodies and local Indian communities in the education of Indian children.

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