

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 22, 2017

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial
Service and General Government

The Honorable Christopher Coons
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial
Service and General Government

Dear Chairman Capito and Ranking Member Coons:

We write to request your support of the Treasury Department's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund and specifically the Native American CDFI Assistance (NACA) Program administered by the CDFI Fund and to ask that you include language in the FY 2018 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill to waive the non-federal match requirement for Native CDFIs applying for NACA funds.

Native communities, including Native American, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian communities, face significant barriers to accessing capital and basic financial services. The CDFI Fund's Native Initiatives, including the NACA Program, were launched in 2001 to help Native communities overcome these barriers by supporting the creation and expansion of Native CDFIs. Since the launch of the Native Initiative the number of certified Native CDFIs has grown from seven to seventy and there are many other organizations working towards becoming certified as a Native CDFI.

We have witnessed the impact of Native CDFIs in our home states of Alaska, Washington and Maine where jobs and economic activity have been generated in Native communities often overlooked by conventional financial institutions. Alaska is home to four certified Native CDFIs including Alaska Growth Capital, which alone has stimulated over \$150 million in economic growth throughout the state's underserved areas. In Washington, the Northwest Native Development Fund is one of four Native CDFIs that has helped to create or retain 238 jobs and establish 17 businesses in the state. Four Directions Development Corporation, a Native CDFI established by the Penobscot Nation in Maine, has issued more than \$7.4 million in housing loans to 162 Wabanaki families statewide over the last 14 years.

With the support of the CDFI Fund these specialized, mission driven organizations are financing businesses, creating jobs, establishing and improving affordable housing, and providing financial services and counselling in Native communities across the country. In FY 2015 alone, Native CDFIs originated \$68 million in loans or investments.

We appreciate your leadership and your past support of the CDFI Fund and we respectfully ask that you provide at least \$16 million for Native CDFIs in the FY 2018 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill. In addition, we ask that you include language in the bill to waive the non-federal match requirement for Native CDFIs seeking NACA program funding.

Language to this effect was included in both the FY 2015 and FY 2016 omnibus appropriations bills.

Native communities are unserved or underserved by both conventional financial institutions and private foundations, the two most common source of CDFI matching funds, and unless the match requirement is waived Native CDFIs have an extremely difficult time accessing the NACA funds their communities desperately need.

We appreciate your leadership and your attention to this importance issue.

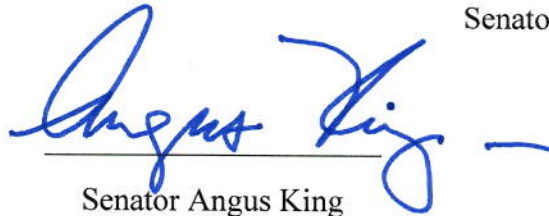
Sincerely,



Senator Dan Sullivan



Senator Maria Cantwell



Senator Angus King