

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Tribal Communities Look to Obama Tax Package to Provide Relief from Ongoing Recession**

National Congress of American Indians' Statement in Support of President Obama's Bipartisan  
Tax Cuts Package

WASHINGTON, D.C. – December 9, 2010 - The National Congress of American Indians has issued a statement of support for President Obama's bipartisan tax cuts package. NCAI President Jefferson Keel, leader of the nation's oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization, called on members of both the House and Senate to find a common path forward to address the unemployment and economic challenges facing tribal communities.

"Tribal communities are disproportionately impacted by the recession. While recovery efforts have started to reach main street America, the solution offered by President Obama gives the recovery a fighting chance in places where the economy continues to struggle," said President Keel. "Specifically, an increase in taxes would stifle economic growth in Indian Country and burden American families with an additional \$3,000 average tax bill at a time when families can't afford it. If this legislation is thwarted, American working families would be denied additional income from a payroll tax holiday and access to the expanded earned income tax credit - all reducing spending at a time when the economy most needs it."

A November 2010 report released by the Economic Policy Institute shows that from the first half of 2007 to the first half of 2010, the American Indian unemployment rate nationally increased 7.7 percentage points to 15.2%. Additionally in the first half of 2010, the unemployment rate for Alaska Natives jumped 6.3 percentage points to 21.3%.

"We applaud the Obama administration and those championing a bipartisan effort to keep Indian Country and America on the path to recovery," continued Keel. "We urge Congress to support the negotiated tax package."

Read the Economic Policy Institute report here: <http://www.epi.org/publications/entry/ib289>

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