

Prepared Statement of Ben Nighthorse Campbell
Chairman - Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
Legislative Hearing on Legislation to Reform the Indian
Reservation Roads Program

June 4, 2003

Good morning and welcome to the Committee's hearing on proposals to re-authorize the Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) Program.

Sixty percent of roads in the IRR System remain unpaved which has obvious impacts on the Tribes' ability to improve their economies.

In rural Indian communities having paved roads often means the difference between life and death in terms of fire and police protection; ambulance service; and our growing concern with homeland security.

As of this past Monday, four Indian road bills are pending before the Committee:

One I introduced (S.281);
One Sen. Bingaman introduced (S.725);
One Sen. Johnson introduced (S.1122); and
One Sen. Domenici introduced (S.1165).

Today we will hear from Federal and Tribal witnesses to determine how best to reform the IRR program.

I will tell the Members that it is my intention to report a bill by the end of June as the larger TEA-21 reauthorization will be on the Senate Floor in early July.

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