

# SAC and FOX NEWS



Kemîshâtênemopena êthâkihiyakwe!

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## Chief's Address To The Nation



Tribal Members  
 "Spring Break" has come and gone for our tribal students. I'm hoping you had a good time spent with family, catching up on sleep, and just enjoying the break from school!



Chief George Thurman

Indian Country has had some good news the first quarter of 2013, awaits the effect of sequestration, and is watching the development of the battle over the Keystone XL Pipeline; therefore, my whole article is devoted to national news this month.

### NATIONAL NEWS

**President Signs 2013 VAWA – Empowering Tribes to Protect Native Women.**  
 President Obama signed into law the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013. This Act strengthens the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) with increased protections for Native American women. During the signing ceremony the President emphasized, "Tribal governments have an inherent right to protect their people, and all women deserve the right to live free from fear. And that is what today is all about."

Making Native American communities safer and more secure has been a steadfast priority of the Obama Administration. Currently, Native American women are more than twice as likely to be victims of domestic violence as non-Native women. A recent Center for Disease Control and Prevention study found that 46% of Native American women have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by a partner in their lifetime. One regional survey conducted by University of Oklahoma researchers showed that nearly three out of five Native American women had been assaulted by their spouses or intimate partners. Tribal leaders tell us the actual rates of victimization may be even higher, since the justice system's failure to adequately respond leaves many Native American victims unable to safely come forward with their stories.

In July 2010, President Obama signed the Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA), which provided for enhanced sentencing by tribal courts. Upon signing the TLOA, the President stated that the prevalence of violence against Native American women remains "an assault on our national conscience" that "we cannot allow to continue." The tribal provisions included in the reauthorization of VAWA give tribes important new tools to help address this problem. Tribal governments — police, prosecutors, and courts — are essential to the response to these crimes, but have long lacked the authority to address them effectively. Prior to TLOA's enactment, no matter how violent the offense, tribal courts could sentence Indian offenders to only one year in prison. Even worse, since a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1978, tribal courts have had no authority to prosecute a non-Indian who commits domestic violence, even if he lives on the reservation, works for the



**New Cultural Center Grand Opening:** The Grand Opening will be Tuesday, April 23 at 10:00 am

tribe, and is married to a tribal member.

Not surprisingly, abusers who are not arrested are more likely to repeat, and escalate, their attacks. Research shows that law enforcement's failure to arrest and prosecute abusers both emboldens attackers and deters victims from reporting future incidents. In short, the jurisdictional framework in Indian country has left many serious acts of domestic violence and dating violence unprosecuted and unpunished. The reauthorization of VAWA signed by President Obama will empower Indian tribes to protect all Native American women in Indian country, at long last.

Following up on countless reports from Native women and tribal leaders, the Administration, led by the Department of Justice, consulted formally with the tribes and then developed and submitted to Congress a proposal to address the jurisdictional barriers that have allowed crimes of domestic violence in Indian country to go unprosecuted. Because the Justice Department's proposal was ultimately included in the VAWA reauthorization bill, tribes will now be able to prosecute non-Indian perpetrators of domestic violence against Native American women in Indian country. The new law also clarifies that tribal courts have full civil jurisdiction to provide Native American women the safety and security of protection orders and gives additional tools to federal prosecutors to combat severe cases of domestic violence.

The Obama Administration

looks forward to partnering with Indian tribes to implement all of the new provisions included in the VAWA reauthorization law.

### SEQUESTRATION.

The Sac and Fox Nation received a letter from Kevin Washburn, Assistant Secretary, United States Department of the Interior Office of the Secretary, that outlined how the sequester will affect the SFN.

Washburn's letter stated that the DOI contracts with tribes for over \$2 billion annually for programs and services and recognizes how important these programs are and how the reduction will affect the ability to provide these programs and services.

Washburn said the DOI budget has been cut by \$800 million for the remainder of the year but the DOI reductions will be made equitably among recipients or activities. The sequester leaves dollar amounts undetermined but the DOI Office of the Secretary will keep tribes informed and will revisit payments should the sequester be corrected.

"While these reductions are unfortunate and will be damaging, DOI is doing everything within our power to protect our mission to the greatest extent possible," Washburn said. "Accordingly, we are prepared to work closely with you to manage these reductions to the extent that we can. Should Congress take subsequent action that changes the level or nature of these reductions, we will work closely with you to manage those changes, as well."

KEYSTONE XL

### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

House to vote before Memorial Day on bill approving Keystone pipeline

By Ben Geman

03/15/13 11:51 AM ET

*The Hills Global Affairs Blog*  
 House GOP leaders will bring legislation to the floor before Memorial Day to approve the Keystone XL pipeline and have assigned it the number H.R. 3, signifying the importance of the measure, a top Republican said Friday.

"H.R. 3 is really about one thing. It is about energy independence for North America," House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-Mich.) said at a bicameral press conference with several Republicans and centrist Democrats.

Leaders of the GOP-controlled house assign the lowest bill numbers to measures that reflect top political and policy priorities. H.R. 1 has been set aside for comprehensive tax reform. "It shows ... the significance the leadership puts into this legislation and our intent is to bring it to the floor before Memorial Day," Upton said. The lawmakers held a press conference in the Capitol urging approval of Keystone ahead of President Obama's energy policy speech on Friday outside of Chicago.

"I know the president is in his home state of Illinois today and he is going to talk about energy issues, and I think this is one of the key parts of any energy package or plan or vision," said Rep. Lee Terry (R-Neb.) the lead sponsor of the latest bill to green-light TransCanada Corp.'s proposed pipeline.

The pipeline would bring oil  
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## Upcoming Events 2013

April 5-6-7

GONA Conference

April 5 & 6

10:00 am - 5:00 pm

April 7

12:00 - 4:00 pm

April 9, 5 pm

Sac & Fox Nation  
 Veterans' Meeting  
 Elders Bldg Stroud

Sunday April 14

Elders Advisory  
 Committee Meeting  
 Shawnee

Potluck 2:00 pm

Tuesday April 23

Sac & Fox National  
 Public Library  
 Open House  
 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Tuesday April 23

Sac & Fox Nation  
 Cultural Center  
 Grand Opening  
 10:00 am

Saturday, May 11

Mothers Day Dance  
 2:00 p.m.  
 SFN Community  
 Building

Saturday May 25

Memorial Day  
 Pow-Wow  
 Sac & Fox Reservation



**To Bridge A Gap Conference:** From Left: Sac and Fox Nation Principal Chief George Thurman speaking at the conference, Second Chief Orvena Gregory and Business Committee member, Stella Nullake also attended the "To Bridge A Gap" conference in Norman, Oklahoma. (photos by Historic Preservation Officer, Sandra Massey)