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FROM THE PUBLISHER

In December, *Indian Gaming* magazine was honored to cover the Third White House Tribal Nations Conference held at the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C. The conference provided leaders from the 565 federally recognized tribes the opportunity to interact directly with the President and representatives from his Administration. In this issue we feature an overview of this historic conference, a special Tribal Leader Roundtable with five tribal leaders who sat down personally with the President, and an insightful Q&A with Representative Tom Cole (R-OK).

Highlights of the event included the President's signing of an Executive Order that establishes the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education; Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar naming five tribal leaders to a national commission that will evaluate the Interior's trust management of nearly \$4 billion in Native American trust funds; a new Tribal Consultation Policy that will allow tribal governments expanded roles in forming federal policy that impacts Indian Country; reform of federal surface leasing regulations for American Indian lands; and a joint effort by the Administration and FEMA to amend the Stafford Act to allow federally recognized tribal governments the ability to make a request directly to the President for a federal emergency or disaster declaration. These remarkable pro-Native announcements continue to build on the work the Administration has done since the first two conferences, and will surely have a lasting impact on Indian Country for many years to come.

As we welcome a New Year, I would like to take a moment to welcome John Hinton, Vice President at Walsh Bishop to our Editorial Advisory Board. We look forward to his valuable expertise and input in the areas of architecture and project management.

Next up we head to California for the Western Indian Gaming Conference held January 31st -February 2nd at Morongo Casino, Resort & Spa. If you are able to attend the show, please stop by our booth to say hello!



Steve Burke, Publisher

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