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Contact: Heidi Cuny, 605.255.5909, heidi@cunycommunications.com

South Dakota Indian Business Alliance Launches Educational Campaign in Support of Tribal ID Law

Fort Pierre, South Dakota – July 16, 2012 – The South Dakota Indian Business Alliance (SDIBA) launched an educational campaign to raise awareness among banking institutions and retailers regarding the passage of the Tribal ID Act by the South Dakota Legislature in March 2011, which enables identification cards issued by the state’s nine federally recognized tribes to be used for banking purposes, check cashing, and tobacco purchases.

The campaign was officially kicked off at the South Dakota Tribal Relations Committee meeting in late June at the State Capitol and follows complaints SDIBA received from tribal members whose tribal identification cards were denied. “It was a great victory when the Tribal ID Act passed, but now it is disappointing to see that Native people are still being excluded from the mainstream economy because certain banks and retailers are not in compliance with the law,” states Tanya Fiddler, Chair of SDIBA.

Since launching the campaign, SDIBA has been working closely with the South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations and other state representatives. “We were fielding many calls when the bill was passed and are pleased to be playing a key role in communicating with the state to expand our reach,” says Stacey LaCompte, Executive Director of Wakpa Sica Reconciliation Place, which serves as SDIBA’s field office.

Nationally, only one in five Native Americans has a state-issued identification card, and approximately 10% of the state of South Dakota’s population consists of Native Americans. “Not only does the Tribal ID Act provide Native families with access to banking services, but it potentially increases banks’ and retailers’ customer base by nearly 10%,” says Fiddler.

SDIBA’s Tribal ID public education campaign will include outreach to the state’s bankers and retailers associations and will target specific companies that have been reported to be noncompliant with the law. “Somehow there has been a breakdown in communication, and we feel that education is the key to getting everyone on board,” says Fiddler.

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About the South Dakota Indian Business Alliance

The South Dakota Indian Business Alliance (SDIBA) was formed in 2007 to cultivate effective and efficient business environments in South Dakota’s Indian Country. In addition, SDIBA collaborates with partner organizations to maximize the benefits of joint efforts by the State and the Tribes to increase Indian

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entrepreneurship in South Dakota. SDIBA uses a comprehensive business development model that addresses Governance, Infrastructure, Finance, and Resources in order to develop sustainable businesses in Indian Country. The mission of SDIBA is to enhance Indian Business development by leveraging partnerships and resources of diverse institutions and organizations.