Federal Laws Enacted From 2019-2026
For the Benefit of Indians or Indian Nations

Research Findings

Requested by the

State of Maine Working Group to Develop Recommendations for Extending Federal Beneficial Laws to the Wabanaki Nations

Compiled by the Human Rights and Indigenous Peoples Clinic
Suffolk University Law School

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Executive Summary

In October 2026, the Working Group to Develop Recommendations for Extending Federal Beneficial Laws to the Wabanaki Nations for the State of Maine ("Working Group") made a request to the Human Rights and Indigenous Peoples Clinic at Suffolk University Law School ("Clinic") to research federal laws enacted from 2019-2026 for the benefit of Indians and Indian nations. This report presents the findings from that research and builds on the Clinic's report in 2019, which identified 151 federal laws that may benefit Indians and Indian nations.

The Clinic followed the same research protocol it did in 2019. Namely, the Clinic utilized Congress.gov which covers all federal laws, to conduct its research. The Clinic used different search terms, i.e. Indian, Native American, tribe, American Indian and tribal to capture the terminology used at different periods of times and to ensure that all potential laws were found. Using the following guidelines, the research results were reviewed to determine whether to include a particular law in the final findings.

- Laws which were applicable to just a specific tribe(s) were not included.
- Laws which solely provided for the appropriation of funds under a preexisting program were not included.
- If a law seemed to provide a benefit to an Indian nation or Indians, it was included.
- If a law amended an earlier law, the Clinic did not review the earlier law which was being amended. Instead, if it seemed that the earlier law and the amendment of that law provided a benefit to an Indian nation or Indians, it was included.
- If there was a question whether to include a law, the law was included.

When considering whether to include a law, the Clinic did not conduct a legal analysis under 25 U.S.C. § 1735(b), the section of the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act which limits the application of federal laws to tribes in Maine. In other words, the Clinic did not attempt to answer the question whether a law was "for the benefit of Indians [or] Indian nations" and "which would affect or preempt the application of the laws of the State of Maine." As a result, this report and its findings should not be regarded as a comprehensive list of laws triggered by section 1735(b), but rather a list of federal laws enacted after November 2019 (the date of the first report) related to or which may benefit Indians and Indian nations.

The Clinic identified 23 laws covering a range of topics, bringing the total number of laws possibly triggered by section 1735(b) to 174 laws. The report lists all the laws and then follows with a list of each law with a brief description and a web link to the full document. We hope that this report proves helpful in the Working Group's mandate.

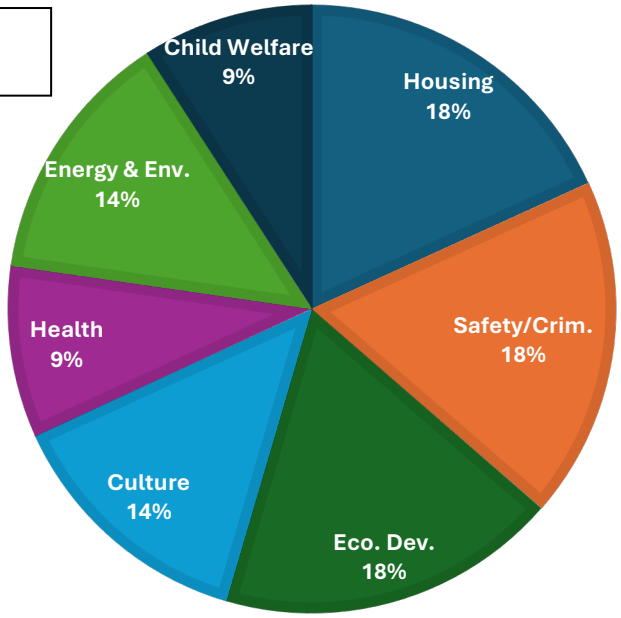
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List of Laws (November 2019- November 2026)

1. Savanna's Act, P. L. 116-165
2. Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act of 2020, P. L. 116-261
3. Native American Business Incubators Program Act, P. L. 116-174
4. Esther Martinez Native Languages Programs Reauthorization Act, P.L. 116-101
5. American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, P. L. 117-2
6. Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, P. L. 117-58
7. STANDUP Act of 2021, P. L. 117-100
8. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of S. Con. Res. 14., P. L. 117-169
9. Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, P. L. 117-58
10. STANDUP Act of 2021, P. L. 117-100
11. FIRE Act, P. L. 117-251
12. Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act of 2022, P. L. 117-255
13. Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony Act of 2021, P. L. 117-258
14. Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, P. L. 118-47
15. National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2024, P. L. 118-31
16. Native American Child Protection Act, P. L. 118-160
17. Supporting America's Children and Families Act, P. L. `118-258
18. Tribal Trust Land Homeownership Act of 2025, P. L. 119-88
19. Save Our Seas 2.0 Amendments Act, P. L. 119–65
20. Tribal Trust Land Homeownership Act of 2025, P. L. 119-88
21. Modernizing Access to Our Public Oceans Act, P. L. 119-116
22. 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, P. L. `119-101
23. SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Reauthorization Act of 2025, P. L. 119-44

Laws categorized by topic



116th Congress 2019-2021

Public Law 116-165
Name of Law: Savanna's Act
Summary: This bill directs the Department of Justice (DOJ) to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols to address missing and murdered Indians. The bill requires DOJ to take the following actions: provide training to law enforcement agencies on how to record tribal enrollment for victims in federal databases; develop and implement a strategy to notify citizens of the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System; conduct specific outreach to Indian tribes regarding the ability to publicly enter information through the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System or other non-law enforcement sensitive portal; develop guidelines for response to cases of missing and murdered Indians; provide training and technical assistance to Indian tribes and law enforcement agencies for implementation of the developed guidelines; and report statistics on missing and murdered Indians.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/227/text

Public Law 116-261
Name of Law: Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act of 2020
Description: Requires the Department of Health and Human Services to use Native labor and industry products for business and economic development and authorizes the Administration for Native Americans to provide financial assistance for Native financial institutions.
Amendment: Amends the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000, the Buy Indian Act, and the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to apply the laws to Native owned businesses that a governed by Tribal laws.
https://www.congress.gov/116/statute/STATUTE-134/STATUTE-134-Pg3306.pdf

Public Law 116-174
Name of Law: Native American Business Incubators Program Act
Description: Establishes a grant program in the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development for establishing and operating business organizations that provides facilities for start-ups and established businesses to accelerate the growth of the business with support resources.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/116/statute/STATUTE-134/STATUTE-134-Pg839.pdf

Public Law 116-101
Name of Law: Esther Martinez Native Languages Programs Reauthorization Act
Description: Amends the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to reauthorize federal native language immersion and restoration programs. Extends grant terms to up to 5 years to support community-based language nests, survival schools, and restoration programs broadly.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/116/plaws/publ101/PLAW-116publ101.pdf

117TH CONGRESS (2021-2022)

Public Law 117-2
Name of Law: American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
Description: Provided to wide range of government programs funding for including child care assistance to essential workers without regard to income eligibility requirements, to assist low-income households that pay a high proportion of household income for drinking water and wastewater services by providing funds to owners or operators of public water systems or treatment works to reduce arrearages of and rates charged to such households for such services, to supplement Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grants, the Indian Health Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to address the impacts of COVID-19 on social welfare and public safety programs, including by providing for tribal housing improvement, tribal government services and child welfare assistance, and delivery of potable water, tribal communities for federal housing assistance through the Native American Housing Block Grant, Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant, and Indian Community Development Block Grant programs, for the Administration for Native Americans to award emergency grants to tribal communities for Native American language preservation and maintenance and for the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) to allocate for programs or activities that are operated or funded by the BIE.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1319?hl=Indian&s=1&r=16

Public Law 117-58
Name of Law: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
Description: This law provided funding for expedited and efficient environmental reviews for tribal transportation safety projects, use of tribal transportation funds to carry out bridge replacements, a study of the long-term viability and useful life of existing roads on Indian land, and support drinking water and sanitation projects on Indian reservations.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/3684?hl=Indian&s=1&r=13

Public Law 117-100
Name of Law: STANDUP Act of 2021
Description: This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), when awarding certain grants for priority mental-health needs, to give preference to state, tribal, and local educational agencies that plan to implement evidence-based suicide awareness and prevention training policies. HHS may also consider suicide rates in the applicable jurisdiction and other factors when awarding the grants.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/1543?hl=Indian&s=1&r=12

Public Law 117-169
Name of Law: An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of S. Con. Res. 14.
Description: The act modifies the energy tax credit to allocate 1.8 gigawatts for environmental justice solar and wind capacity credits in low-income communities and Indian lands in 2023 and 2024. Facilities receiving allocations must be placed in service within four years after the allocation date. The act allows certain tax-exempt entities, including state and local

governments and Indian tribal governments, to treat certain energy-related tax credit amounts as direct payments of tax. It also provides funding to USDA for grants to states through the Forest Legacy Program for the acquisition of land and interests in land, such as conservation easements. It also provides grants to states, local governments, Indian tribes, and other eligible entities for tree planting and related activities. In addition, funding is provided to DOE for a high-efficiency electric home rebate program that awards grants to state energy offices and Indian tribes. Further, it provides funding for grants to states, Indian tribes, and air pollution control agencies to update their systems to ensure communication with the Integrated Compliance Information System.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/5376?hl=Indian&s=1&r=14

Public Law 117-251
Name of Law: FIRE Act
Description: The act allows Indian tribal governments to apply for grants for equipping, upgrading, and constructing state and local emergency operations centers.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3092?hl=Indian&s=1&r=10

Public Law 117-255
Name of Law: Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act of 2022
Description: The President may provide financial, technical, or other assistance to an eligible entity (a state, Indian tribal government, or local government) that plans to perform a resilience or mitigation project within, or that primarily benefits, a CDRZ.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3875?hl=Indian&s=1&r=11

Public Law 117-258
Name of Law: Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony Act of 2021
Description: This act prohibits the exportation of Native American cultural items and archaeological resources that were illegally obtained; provides for the return of such items, including voluntary returns; and establishes and increases related criminal penalties.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2930?hl=Indian&s=1&r=9

118th Congress

Public Law 118-47
Name of Law: Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024
Description: Permanently authorizes any Indian tribe that operates a Head Start program to set its own enrollment selection criteria, notwithstanding certain income eligibility requirements of the Head Start Act (Sec. 645) and related regulations, including criteria that prioritizes children whose family or household members are members of an Indian tribe. (Div. D, Sec. 238).
Link: https://www.congress.gov/118/plaws/publ47/PLAW-118publ47.pdf

Public Law 118-31
Name of Law: National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2024
Description: Requires the Secretary of Defense to ensure that each military installation with an Indian Tribe, Native Hawaiian organization, or Tribal interest in the surrounding area has a Tribal liaison located at the installation. It exempts Tribal law enforcement and Tribal emergency service agencies from the American Security Drone Act's restrictions on procuring and operating drones made by covered foreign entities, where necessary for law enforcement or search and rescue operations on Indian lands. The restrictions, and this exemption, expire five years after enactment. It grants a Federal charter to the nonprofit organization, National American Indian Veterans, incorporated. Its purpose includes advocating for all American Indian veterans and their families in dealings with Federal and State agencies, providing outreach to Indian Tribes in need, and training Tribal Veterans Service Officers (Sec. 5103).
Link: https://www.congress.gov/118/plaws/publ31/PLAW-118publ31.pdf

Public Law 118-160
Name of the Law: Native American Child Protection Act
Description: This act revises certain programs related to the prevention, investigation, treatment, and prosecution of family violence, child abuse, and child neglect involving Indian children and families. Specifically, the act revises the Indian Child Abuse Treatment Grant Program to encourage the use of grants for culturally appropriate treatment services and programs. The act renames the Indian Child Resource and Family Services Centers as the National Indian Child Resource and Family Services Center. It also requires the center to (1) provide advice, technical assistance, and training to urban Indian organizations; (2) develop certain technical assistance materials for Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations; and (3) develop model intergovernmental agreements between tribes and states to prevent, investigate, treat, and prosecute incidents of family violence, child abuse, and child neglect involving Indian children and families. Additionally, the act revises the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Program to allow Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and intertribal consortia to use program funds for additional activities, such as operational costs for child protective services.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/118/plaws/publ160/PLAW-118publ160.pdf

Public Law 118-258
Name of the law: Supporting America's Children and Families Act
Description: This Act reauthorizes through FY2029 certain child and family services and modifies programs related to prevention services, youth in foster care, parental substance use disorder, and kinship caregiving, which are generally administered by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

Title II of the Act known as the Strengthening State and Tribal Child Support Enforcement Act, permits tribal child support enforcement agencies to access the Federal Tax Refund Offset Program to collect past-due child support payments from the federal tax refunds of noncustodial parents. Additionally, the title authorizes the Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration to disclose certain tax return information to tribal child support enforcement agencies. Such information may be disclosed to establish and collect child support obligations from, and to locate, those individuals owing such obligations. The title also explicitly authorizes state and tribal child support enforcement agencies to disclose necessary information to contractors for these purposes. The title also permits the ACF to reimburse tribal agencies for certain reporting costs related to the Federal Parent Locator Service.

119th Congress

Public Law 119-88
Name of the law: Tribal Trust Land Homeownership Act of 2025
Description: This act sets forth requirements for the processing of a proposed residential leasehold mortgage, business leasehold mortgage, land mortgage, or right-of-way document by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The BIA must notify lenders upon receipt of such documentation, perform a preliminary review of such documents not later than 10 days after receipt, and approve or disapprove of such documents within 20 or 30 days, depending on the type of application.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/119/plaws/publ88/PLAW-119publ88.pdf

Public Law 119–65
Name of the law: Save Our Seas 2.0 Amendments Act
Description: This bill reauthorizes and modifies administration of Marine Debris Program (MDP) activities and the Marine Debris Foundation. (The program and the foundation support efforts to assess, prevent, and otherwise address marine debris and its adverse impacts on the U.S. economy, the marine environment, and navigation safety.) Further, the bill directs the foundation to develop and implement best practices for conducting outreach to Indian tribes and tribal governments. The foundation must locate its principal office in the National Capital Region or a coastal shoreline community.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/119/plaws/publ65/PLAW-119publ65.pdf

Public Law 119-88
Name of the law: Tribal Trust Land Homeownership Act of 2025
Description: This act sets forth requirements for the processing of a proposed residential leasehold mortgage, business leasehold mortgage, land mortgage, or right-of-way document by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/723?s=1&r=8

Public Law 119-116
Name of Law: Modernizing Access to Our Public Oceans Act
Description: Under the act, NOAA must consult with relevant stakeholders (including state and local governments, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations) to develop and adopt standards for the coordination and dissemination of geospatial data relating to fishing restrictions and recreational vessels' use of federal waterways, including the exclusive economic zone of the United States (EEZ).
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/759?s=2&r=2

Public Law 119-101
Name of Law: 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act
Description: This act establishes and modifies various federal housing programs, establishes a seven-year competitive grant program to assist metropolitan cities, urban counties, local

governments, or tribes that have demonstrated improved housing supply growth and authorizes competitive grants for local governments, municipal membership organizations, and tribes to select pre reviewed designs of mixed-income housing for use in the grantee's jurisdiction.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/6644?s=2&r=10

Public Law 119-44
Name of Law: SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Reauthorization Act of 2025
Description: This act reauthorizes and revises programs and activities relating to addressing substance use disorders, overdoses, and mental health. It provides statutory authority for SAMHSA's State Opioid Response and Tribal Opioid Response Grants to be used for facilitating access to drug checking technologies, such as fentanyl and xylazine test strips, to the extent permitted by federal and state law. It also requires that, when HHS issues new regulations or guidance on grant programs addressing opioid use disorders, references to an opioid overdose reversal drug (e.g., naloxone) must broadly include any opioid overdose reversal drug approved by the FDA. Within one year after the act's enactment, HHS must update all references accordingly in regulations or guidance issued prior to the act's enactment that are applicable to State Opioid Response Grants, Tribal Opioid Response Grants, or certain other grants relating to substance use disorder prevention.
Link: https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/2483?s=1&r=10