

DUSTY JOHNSON
SOUTH DAKOTA

1714 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2801
(855) 225-2801

EMAIL VIA WEBSITE:
dustyjohnson.house.gov



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION &
INFRASTRUCTURE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE
CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

January 17, 2025

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tim Walberg
Chairman
Committee on Education & Workforce
2176 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Scott
Ranking Member
Committee on Education & Workforce
2176 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Westerman, Chairman Walberg, Ranking Member Huffman, and Ranking Member Scott:

I write to bring your attention to a grave matter impacting Indian country. As I speak with leaders from South Dakota's nine tribes, it is clear there is serious concern with the dire state of on-reservation Indian education. I respectfully request that the Committees on Education & Workforce and Natural Resources conduct an oversight hearing on the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).

Over the past three fiscal years, Indian education needs have been underfunded, exacerbating financial shortfalls for both critical programs and basic safety, infrastructure, and educational standards. A recent Department of Interior (DOI) Office of Inspector General (OIG) report demonstrated BIE's systemic mismanagement and noted an over \$1 billion backlog in deferred maintenance.

Tribal educators and students are desperate for relief. Schools on reservations are outdated and deteriorating, with many schools in extreme states of disrepair due to leaking roofs and walls, mold, and signs of asbestos. Do we expect children to learn in these conditions? These students deserve better.

An oversight hearing on BIE and tribally-controlled schools would shed light on the many concerns of tribal leaders such as severe underfunding, outdated facilities, teacher shortages, safety concerns, and inadequate infrastructure impacting tribally-controlled schools.

I look forward to working with you to ensure the federal government works to meet the

education needs of children in Indian country. Please reach out to my office with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dusty Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

DUSTY JOHNSON
Member of Congress