

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9604

To ensure the Department of Interior will manage all Tribal education and job training, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 9, 2026

Mr. OWENS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

A BILL

To ensure the Department of Interior will manage all Tribal education and job training, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Less Bureaucracy,
5 Better Tribal Education Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. TRANSFER AND REPEAL OF DEPARTMENT OF EDU-**
7 **CATION FUNCTIONS RELATING TO TRIBAL**
8 **EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING.**

9 (a) TRANSFER.—There are transferred to the Sec-
10 retary of Interior all the functions which the Secretary of

1 Education exercised before the effective date of this Act
2 (including all related functions of any officer or employee
3 of the Department of Education) with respect to each of
4 the following:

5 (1) Demonstration grants program for Amer-
6 ican Indian children and youth authorized under sec-
7 tion 6121 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
8 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7441).

9 (2) The Indian Education Professional Develop-
10 ment Grant program authorized under section 6122
11 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
12 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7442).

13 (3) The Alaska Native Education program au-
14 thorized under part C of title VI of the Elementary
15 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
16 7541 et seq.).

17 (4) The Native Hawaiian Education program
18 authorized under part B of title VI of the Elemen-
19 tary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
20 U.S.C. 7511 et seq.).

21 (5) The American Indian Education National
22 Activities authorized under subpart 3 of part A of
23 title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education
24 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7451 et seq.).

1 (6) The State-Tribal Education Partnership
2 program authorized under section 6132 of the Ele-
3 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
4 U.S.C. 7452).

5 (7) The Native American and Alaska Native
6 Language Program authorized under section 6133
7 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
8 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7453).

9 (8) The Native American Language Resource
10 Center programs authorized under section 6131 of
11 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
12 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7451), section 2 of the Native
13 American Language Resource Center Act of 2022
14 (20 U.S.C. 7457), and the Native American Lan-
15 guages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.).

16 (9) The Native American Career and Technical
17 Education Program authorized under section 116 of
18 the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education
19 Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2326).

20 (10) The Native Hawaiian Career and Tech-
21 nical Education Program authorized under section
22 116 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical
23 Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2326).

24 (11) The Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Ca-
25 reer and Technical Institutions Program authorized

1 under section 117 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and
2 Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2327).

3 (12) The Native American and Alaska Native
4 Children in School (NAM) program authorized
5 under section 3112 of the Elementary and Sec-
6 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6822).

7 (13) Grants to Alaska Native-serving and Na-
8 tive Hawaiian-serving institutions—

9 (A) authorized under section 317 of the
10 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
11 1059d); and

12 (B) for which funds are made available
13 under section 371 of the Higher Education Act
14 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q).

15 (14) Grants to American Indian Tribally Con-
16 trolled Colleges and Universities—

17 (A) authorized under section 316 of the
18 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
19 1059c); and

20 (B) for which funds are made available
21 under section 371 of the Higher Education Act
22 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q).

23 (15) Grants to Asian American and Native
24 American Pacific Islander-serving institutions—

1 (A) authorized under section 320 of the
2 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
3 1059g); and

4 (B) for which funds are made available
5 under section 371 of the Higher Education Act
6 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q).

7 (16) Grants to Native American-serving, non-
8 Tribal institutions—

9 (A) authorized under section 319 of the
10 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
11 1059f); and

12 (B) for which funds are made available
13 under section 371 of the Higher Education Act
14 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q).

15 (17) The American Indian Vocational Rehabili-
16 tation Services program authorized under section
17 121 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C.
18 741).

19 (18) The American Indian Education Formula
20 Grants authorized under subpart 1 of part A of title
21 VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
22 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7421 et seq.).

23 (19) The American Indian education-related
24 Research and Development Infrastructure Grant
25 program authorized under part B of title VII of the

1 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1138 et
2 seq.).

3 (20) The American Indian education-related
4 Special Education Grants to States program author-
5 ized under sections 611 and 619 of the Individuals
6 with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411;
7 1419).

8 (21) The American Indian education-related
9 Special Education Grants for Infants and Families
10 program authorized under part C of title VI of the
11 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20
12 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.).

13 (22) American Indian Resilience in Education
14 program authorized under section 11006(1) of the
15 American Rescue Plan of 2021.

16 (b) REPEAL.—The following provisions of law are re-
17 pealed:

18 (1) Part J of title VIII of the Higher Education
19 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1161j).

20 (2) Part Z of title VIII of the Higher Edu-
21 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1161z).

22 **SEC. 3. EXERCISE OF AUTHORITIES.**

23 Except as otherwise provided by law, the Secretary
24 of the Interior may, for purposes of performing a function
25 transferred under this Act, exercise all authorities under

1 any other provision of law that were available with respect
2 to the performance of that function to the Secretary of
3 Education immediately before the effective date of the
4 transfer of the function under this Act.

5 **SEC. 4. TRANSFER AND ALLOCATIONS OF APPROPRIA-**
6 **TIONS AND PERSONNEL.**

7 Except as otherwise provided in this Act, the per-
8 sonnel employed in connection with, and the assets, liabil-
9 ities, contracts, property, records, and unexpended bal-
10 ances of appropriations, authorizations, allocations, and
11 other funds employed, used, held, arising from, available
12 to, or to be made available in connection with the func-
13 tions transferred under this Act, subject to section 1531
14 of title 31, United States Code, shall be transferred to the
15 Secretary of the Interior. Unexpended funds transferred
16 pursuant to this section shall be used only for the purposes
17 for which the funds were originally authorized and appro-
18 priated.

19 **SEC. 5. AUTHORITY OF DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MAN-**
20 **AGEMENT AND BUDGET WITH RESPECT TO**
21 **FUNCTIONS TRANSFERRED.**

22 (a) PERSONNEL DETERMINATIONS.—The Director of
23 the Office of Management and Budget shall ensure that
24 this Act does not result in a net increase in full-time equiv-
25 alent employees at the Federal agencies impacted by this

1 Act, based on the number of such employees at such agen-
2 cies on the date of enactment of this Act.

3 (b) FUNCTION DETERMINATIONS.—If necessary, the
4 Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall
5 make any determination of the functions that are trans-
6 ferred under this Act.

7 (c) INCIDENTAL TRANSFERS.—The Director of the
8 Office of Management and Budget, at such time or times
9 as the Director shall provide, may make such determina-
10 tions as may be necessary with regard to the functions
11 transferred by this Act, and to make such additional inci-
12 dental dispositions of personnel, assets, liabilities, grants,
13 contracts, property, records, and unexpended balances of
14 appropriations, authorizations, allocations, and other
15 funds held, used, arising from, available to, or to be made
16 available in connection with such functions, as may be nec-
17 essary to carry out the provisions of this Act. The Director
18 shall provide for the termination of the affairs of all enti-
19 ties terminated by this Act and for such further measures
20 and dispositions as may be necessary to effectuate the pur-
21 poses of this Act.

22 (d) CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE.—On the effec-
23 tive date of this Act, the Director of the Office of Manage-
24 ment and Budget shall certify compliance with this Act,
25 including the requirement under subsection (a), to the

1 Committee on Education and Workforce of the House of
2 Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education,
3 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate.

4 **SEC. 6. DELEGATION AND ASSIGNMENT.**

5 Except as otherwise expressly prohibited by law or
6 otherwise provided in this Act, the Secretary of the Inte-
7 rior may delegate any of the functions so transferred to
8 such officers and employees of the Department of the Inte-
9 rior as the Secretary may designate, and may authorize
10 successive redelegations of such functions as may be nec-
11 essary or appropriate. No delegation of functions under
12 this section or under any other provision of this Act shall
13 relieve the Secretary of the Interior of responsibility for
14 the administration of the function.

15 **SEC. 7. REFERENCES.**

16 With regard to functions transferred under section 2,
17 a reference in any other Federal law, Executive order,
18 rule, regulation, or delegation of authority, or any docu-
19 ment of or relating to—

20 (1) the Secretary of Education shall be deemed
21 to refer to the Secretary of the Interior; and

22 (2) the Department of Education shall be
23 deemed to refer to the Department of the Interior.

1 **SEC. 8. SAVINGS PROVISIONS.**

2 (a) **LEGAL DOCUMENTS.**—All orders, determinations,
3 rules, regulations, permits, grants, loans, contracts, agree-
4 ments, certificates, licenses, and privileges—

5 (1) that have been issued, made, granted, or al-
6 lowed to become effective by the President, any Fed-
7 eral agency or official thereof, or by a court of com-
8 petent jurisdiction, in the performance of any func-
9 tion that is transferred by this Act; and

10 (2) that are in effect on the effective date of
11 such transfer (or become effective after such date
12 pursuant to their terms as in effect on such effective
13 date),

14 shall continue in effect according to their terms until
15 modified, terminated, superseded, set aside, or revoked in
16 accordance with law by the President, the Secretary of the
17 Interior, any other authorized official, a court of com-
18 petent jurisdiction, or operation of law.

19 (b) **PROCEEDINGS.**—This Act shall not affect any
20 proceedings or any application for any benefits, service,
21 license, permit, certificate, or financial assistance pending
22 on the date of the enactment of this Act before the De-
23 partment of Education (with respect to functions trans-
24 ferred by this Act). Such proceedings and applications
25 shall continue, orders shall be issued in such proceedings,
26 appeals shall be taken therefrom, and payments shall be

1 made pursuant to such orders, as if this Act had not been
2 enacted, and orders issued in any such proceeding shall
3 continue in effect until modified, terminated, superseded,
4 or revoked by a duly authorized official, by a court of com-
5 petent jurisdiction, or by operation of law. Nothing in this
6 subsection shall be considered to prohibit the discontinu-
7 ance or modification of any such proceeding under the
8 same terms and conditions and to the same extent that
9 such proceeding could have been discontinued or modified
10 if this Act had not been enacted.

11 (c) SUITS.—Except as provided in subsection (e)—

12 (1) this Act shall not affect suits commenced
13 before the effective date of this Act; and

14 (2) in all such suits, proceeding shall be had,
15 appeals taken, and judgments rendered in the same
16 manner and with the same effect as if this Act had
17 not been enacted.

18 (d) NONABATEMENT OF ACTIONS.—No suit, action,
19 or other proceeding commenced by or against the Depart-
20 ment of Education (with respect to the functions trans-
21 ferred by this Act), or by or against any individual in the
22 official capacity of such individual as an officer or em-
23 ployee of the Department of Education (with regard to
24 functions transferred by this Act), shall abate by reason
25 of the enactment of this Act.

1 (e) CONTINUANCE OF SUITS.—If, before the date on
2 which a transfer of a function under this Act takes effect,
3 the Secretary of Education or any officer or employee of
4 the Department of Education in the official capacity as
5 such an officer or employee is party to a suit relating to
6 the function, then such suit shall be continued and the
7 Secretary of the Interior, or other appropriate official of
8 the Department of the Interior, shall be substituted or
9 added as a party.

10 (f) ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE AND JUDICIAL RE-
11 VIEW.—Except as otherwise provided by this Act, any
12 statutory requirements relating to notice, hearings, action
13 upon the record, or administrative or judicial review that
14 apply to any function transferred by this Act shall apply
15 to the exercise of such function by the Secretary of the
16 Interior, and other officers of the Department of the Inte-
17 rior, to which such function is transferred by this Act.

18 **SEC. 9. TRANSITION.**

19 Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the
20 Secretary of the Interior is authorized to use, for such pe-
21 riod of time as may reasonably be needed to facilitate the
22 orderly implementation of this Act—

23 (1) the services of officers, employees, and other
24 personnel of the Department of Education with re-
25 gard to functions transferred under this Act;

1 (2) assets of the Department of Education with
2 regard to such functions; and

3 (3) funds appropriated to such functions.

4 **SEC. 10. CONSULTATION.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the
6 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Education
7 shall consult and coordinate with Indian Tribes on the
8 provisions of this Act in accordance with the policy of the
9 Department of Education relating to Consultation and Co-
10 ordination with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal
11 Governments developed pursuant to—

12 (1) Executive Order 13175 (65 Fed. Reg.
13 67249; relating to Consultation and Coordination
14 With Indian Tribal Governments); and

15 (2) Executive Order 13592 (76 Fed. Reg.
16 76603; relating to Improving American Indian and
17 Alaska Native Educational Opportunities and
18 Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities).

19 (b) RESPONSE.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Education
21 shall provide to Indian Tribes a written response to
22 correspondence received from Indian Tribes pursu-
23 ant to subsection (a) in accordance with the policy
24 described in such subsection.

1 (2) PUBLICATION.—The written response de-
2 scribed in paragraph (1) shall be published on public
3 website of the Department.

4 **SEC. 11. DEFINITION OF FUNCTION.**

5 For purposes of this Act, the term “function” in-
6 cludes any duty, obligation, power, authority, responsi-
7 bility, right, privilege, activity, or program.

8 **SEC. 12. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in sections 9
10 and 10, this Act and the amendments made by this Act
11 shall take effect 1 year after the date on which the Sec-
12 retary of Education publishes the written response de-
13 scribed in subsection (b) of section 10.

14 (b) EARLY IMPLEMENTATION.—Notwithstanding
15 subsection (a), transfers of functions under section 2 or
16 any other provision of this Act (other than sections 9 and
17 10) may be carried out during the period—

18 (1) beginning on the date on which the Sec-
19 retary of Education publishes the written response
20 described in subsection (b) of section 10; and

21 (2) ending on the effective date of this Act.

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