• Provide an additional $7 million in the Interior-Bureau of Indian Education account to meet the immediate and critical needs of Tribal College and Universities (TCUs).

**Justification:** The nation’s 37 TCUs already have incurred significant costs related to closing and securing campuses; ensuring that students are able to relocate off campus or sheltering in place with safety patrols; and beginning the first phase of online courses. Virtually all TCUs are moving to online instruction and closing their physical campuses, due to tribal or state directives. TCUs face immediate challenges in addressing: (a) Career and Technical Courses, which often cannot be converted to online courses; (b) Professional development and course redesign for faculty; (c) Equipment for online delivery of courses; and (c) Lack of Internet access in students’ homes. The best estimate of the immediate and short term (8-10 weeks) costs that TCUs have and will incur is $745,520/institution, for a total of $26,838,720. In Phase 3 COVID Relief, CARES Act, TCUs received $20M. An additional $7 million is needed to more adequately address TCU immediate/short-term needs.

• Authorize Tribal Colleges and Universities as eligible to participate in the E-Rate program

**Justification:** Congress should amend the Telecommunications Act to designate TCUs as eligible entities to participate in the federal E-rate program. This is a low cost, long-term solution to part of the digital divide/homework gap in Indian Country. If TCUs were already part of the E-rate program, the mobile hot spots needed to address the “homework gap” on many reservations already would be in place. The cost is estimated to be $8 million per year. This is a modest request compared to the amount of funding available to the E-rate program. (The current annual funding cap is $4.15 billion, of which barely half has been spent this year.) *It is important to note that any program to provide tax credits to existing Internet Service Providers for providing free internet access to students provides little or no help in Indian Country because the IT infrastructure does not exist: 68 percent of those on rural Tribal lands lack access to fixed broadband, according to a 2016 FCC Broadband Progress Report.*

• Establish a $16 million TCU Set-aside in the USDA-Rural Utilities Service Program using existing funds.

**Justification:** Congress may be reluctant to amend the Telecommunications Act to designate TCUs as eligible entities to participate in the federal E-rate program, even though such action would be efficient and low-cost. As an alternative, Congress could establish a $16 million per year set-aside for TCUs under the USDA-Rural Utilities Service. Over the past several years, funding has gone unused in the program. A $16 million set-aside for TCUs, which are the 1994 Land-grant institutions, could be established using existing funds and therefore would be at no additional cost.

• Provide at least $500 million in the Interior-BIE account for a TCU Deferred Maintenance & Rehabilitation Fund, as authorized under the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act.

**Justification:** AIHEC recently conducted a survey of 22 TCUs, which revealed a list of chronic facilities-related needs, including student and faculty housing, classrooms, libraries, and laboratories. The 22 TCUs have an estimated total need of $332.5 million in deferred maintenance and rehabilitation and need $558 million to fully implement existing master plans. Extrapolating this to all 37 TCUs, the total current need is: **Deferred Maintenance/Rehabilitation: $500 million; Completion of Master Plans: $837 million.**