TCU Deferred Maintenance & Rehabilitation Needs
(Tribally Controlled Colleges & Universities Assistance Act, "TCU Act")

- TCUs have a documented need of **nearly $500 million** in deferred maintenance and campus rehabilitation needs.
- TCUs have a documented need of **more than $800 million** to complete existing master plans.
- Despite 40-year-old statutory authority, Congress has never funded the BIE’s TCU Construction/Rehabilitation program.
- Aside from two federal TCUs, TCUs have no dedicated facilities construction/maintenance line in the Interior budget. Repairs and upkeep come out of operating budgets, robbing funds from student support, curriculum development, libraries, and more.

### Congress Must Help Address Critical TCU IT Infrastructure

The federal E-Rate program, known as the School and Library Program of the Universal Services Fund and authorized by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, provides discounts to help schools and libraries secure affordable telecommunications and internet access. The program is particularly important for rural America. TCUs, as rural, community-based, and under-resourced institutions, should be made eligible to participate in the E-Rate program. The cost is estimated at $8 million/yr.

As an alternative, Congress should establish a $16 million/year set aside for TCUs under the USDA-Rural Utilities Service.

- Any program to provide tax credits to existing Internet Service Providers for providing free internet access to students provides little to no help in Indian Country because the IT infrastructure does not exist: 68 percent of Americans on rural Tribal lands lack access to fixed broadband, according to a 2016 FCC Broadband Progress Report.
- 32 TCUs are located in rural or remote areas. For these TCUs, lack of choice of internet service providers exist, driving up costs.
- 31 of 35 accredited TCUs serve as community libraries.
- At some TCUs, more than half the students have NO internet access at home, making online education impossible at present.
- TCUs have more expensive and, on average, much slower internet connectivity than other U.S. institutions of higher education. Average TCU connectivity speed is 336 mbps, compared to 513 mbps (2-year IHE) and 3.5 gbps (4-year IHE). Ilisagvik College, a TCU, has the most expensive and slowest internet connectivity in the entire U.S. higher education system.
- Industry standard for IT equipment replacement is 3-5 years. At TCUs, the average IT equipment replacement timeline is 8.29 years.
- Reliable broadband is essential to making the most of online resources and opportunities for faculty professional development.