As Congress reauthorizes the Higher Education Act of 1965, the nation’s 35 accredited Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), who are the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), propose two new programs and modification to two existing programs to help their Tribal communities achieve their vision of strong sovereign Tribal Nations through excellence in TRIBAL higher education.

Once a language is gone, the traditional knowledge it carries is lost forever. The U.S. faces an endangered languages emergency – barely 15 percent of Native languages still in use in the U.S. are spoken as a first language and several languages are used by only a handful of speakers. AIHEC proposes a new competitive grant program to promote the preservation, revitalization, relevance, and use of endangered American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian languages. Languages and culture are at the heart of the mission of each TCU, and they are among the earliest leaders of Native languages preservation and vitalization efforts in the U.S. However, despite the promise shown by TCU Native Language preservation efforts, minimal federal and private sector resources are available to support these critical activities or to explore new innovative strategies. AIHEC recommends the establishment of a new program to provide resources to TCUs – as well as Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian serving institutions—to support these time sensitive efforts.

**TCU NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE VITALIZATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM (HEA-TITLE III)**

This new program would authorize:
- Critically needed curriculum development and design; academic and community-based instruction
- Professional development for TCU faculty and PK-12 teachers
- Native American language research, including innovations in evidence-based PK-12 curriculum delivery
- $40 million in competitive grant funding per year
- Includes TCUs, Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian serving institutions

**STRENGTHENING PROFESSIONAL AND GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES AT TCUS (HEA-TITLE III)**

The new program would authorize:
- Development and enhancement of graduate-level professional certifications and degree programs at TCUs
- Mentoring, scholarships, and fellowships for student pursuing professional certification and graduate degrees at TCUs
- Curriculum development, faculty development, and student research
- $10 million in competitive grant funding per year
- Provisions consistent with existing programs for HBCUs and HSIs

To support changing community demands and capacity, TCUs need this program, which is modeled after successful HEA-Title III programs for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs), and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs).