

107<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# S. 1344

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## AN ACT

To provide training and technical assistance to Native Americans who are interested in commercial vehicle driving careers.

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 “Native American Com-  
5        mercial Driving Training and Technical Assistance Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

2 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

3 (1) despite the availability of abundant natural  
4 resources on land under the jurisdiction of Indian  
5 tribes and the existence of a rich cultural legacy that  
6 accords great value to self-determination, self-reli-  
7 ance, and independence, Native Americans suffer  
8 higher rates of unemployment, poverty, poor health,  
9 substandard housing, and associated social problems  
10 than any other group in the United States;

11 (2) the United States has an obligation to as-  
12 sist Native American communities in the establish-  
13 ment of appropriate economic and political condi-  
14 tions;

15 (3) the economic success and material well-  
16 being of Indian communities depend on the com-  
17 bined efforts of the Federal Government, tribal gov-  
18 ernments, the private sector, and individuals;

19 (4) commercial vehicle driving programs are  
20 currently offered at several tribal colleges and uni-  
21 versities;

22 (5) the American Trucking Association reports  
23 that at least until 2005, the trucking industry will  
24 need to hire 403,000 truck drivers each year to fill  
25 vacant positions;

1           (6) according to the Federal Government Occu-  
2           pational Handbook, the commercial vehicle driving  
3           industry is expected to expand at the average rate  
4           of expansion for all occupations through the year  
5           2008 because of economic growth and an increase in  
6           the quantity of freight carried by trucks; and

7           (7) a career in commercial vehicle driving offers  
8           a competitive salary, employment benefits, job secu-  
9           rity, and a profession.

10          (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

11           (1) to foster and promote job creation and eco-  
12           nomic opportunities for Native Americans; and

13           (2) to provide education, technical, and training  
14           assistance to Native Americans who are interested in  
15           commercial vehicle driving careers.

16 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

17          In this Act:

18           (1) COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVING.—The term  
19           “commercial vehicle driving” means the driving of—

20                   (A) a vehicle that is a tractor-trailer truck;

21                   or

22                   (B) any other vehicle (such as a bus or a  
23                   vehicle used for the purpose of construction) the  
24                   driving of which requires a commercial license.

1           (2) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian tribe”  
2           has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the  
3           Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance  
4           Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

5           (3) NATIVE AMERICAN.—The term “Native  
6           American” means an individual who is a member  
7           of—

8                     (A) an Indian tribe; or

9                     (B) any people or culture that is indige-  
10           nous to the United States, as determined by the  
11           Secretary.

12           (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
13           the Secretary of Labor.

14 **SEC. 4. COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVING TRAINING PRO-**  
15 **GRAM.**

16           (a) GRANTS.—The Secretary may provide grants, on  
17           a competitive basis, to entities described in subsection (b)  
18           to support programs providing training and certificates  
19           leading to the licensing of Native Americans with respect  
20           to commercial vehicle driving.

21           (b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant  
22           under subsection (a), an entity shall—

23                     (1) be a tribal college or university (as defined  
24           in section 316(b)(3) of the Higher Education Act  
25           (20 U.S.C. 1059(b)(3)); and

1           (2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an ap-  
2           plication at such time, in such manner, and con-  
3           taining such information as the Secretary may re-  
4           quire.

5           (c) PRIORITY.—In providing grants under subsection  
6 (a), the Secretary shall give priority to grant applications  
7 that—

8           (1) propose training that exceeds proposed min-  
9           imum standards for training tractor-trailer drivers  
10          of the Department of Transportation;

11          (2) propose training that exceeds the entry level  
12          truck driver certification standards set by the Pro-  
13          fessional Truck Driver Institute; and

14          (3) propose an education partnership with a  
15          private trucking firm, trucking association, or simi-  
16          lar entity in order to ensure the effectiveness of the  
17          grant program under this section.

18          (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
19          are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are nec-  
20          essary to carry out this Act.

Passed the Senate September 17, 2002.

Attest:

*Secretary.*

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