

Lance Robertson: Hi everyone. My name is Lance Robertson and I'm the new Assistant Secretary for Aging and the Administrator of the Administration for Community Living. Sorry I can't be with you this week and I had really hoped to work it into the schedule. I know Minnesota is beautiful this time of year. But I really hope to be with you next year. Before joining ACL, I was Oklahoma's Director of Aging Services. And in that role, had the opportunity to work closely with many of the tribes—Oklahoma has 39 tribes. And I really enjoyed working on a lot of innovative programming that we had done and that still continues there in that great state. I was also fortunate as a nominee for this position to have the endorsement of the Oklahoma Indian Council on Aging and the National Indian Council on Aging and I'm honored to have that opportunity now to serve at ACL and I look forward to working with you to better serve our tribal elders. You know it's been 39 years since congress recognized the special needs of American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian elders by passing Title VI of the Older Americans Act. I understand to include Title VI in the Older American Act was led by tribal elders. The Title VI story is a wonderful story. Of Grassroots organizing collaboration and success. So, congratulations. Eighty (80) tribes were funded in 1980 and 270 tribes are now funded. For nearly 40 years you have found innovated ways to grow your programs when funding did not increase. You have advocated for the needs of your elders while also providing assistance to help them continue living in their communities. You have made a tremendous difference. In fact, according to most recent data you have served more than 100,000 tribal elders, you have provided 660,000 units of transportation. 2.5 million home delivered meals to 22,000 elders. 2.3 million congregate meals to 52,000 elders. 700,000 units of information and assistance. 1.2 million units of in home assistance. 96,000 units of Respite care. 29,000 units of caregiver assistance. None of that would have happened without all of you and the Title VI program. That's why what you do is so important and that's why the Title VI program is so critical to tribal communities and to tribal elders. At ACL, we know this. That's why we're working hard to include tribes and tribal elders and non-traditional services to tribal elders. By working together, as examples, we've been able to expand Elder Justice programming in tribal communities. About 30 tribes will be funded this year for innovation and Elder Justice programming. We've expanded Falls Prevention programs and chronic disease self-management opportunities for tribal programs. We've worked closely with states to create meaningful legal service assistance that includes tribal specific law. We have started our Long-Term Evaluation of Title VI programs which is being guided by tribal advisors. We have just completed another Long-Term Services and Support Title VI Survey in collaboration with the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging. We have just funded the Rosebud Tribal College to train South Dakota state disability service providers about working with disabilities in Indian Country. It's an exciting program. And ACL is developing our own Tribal Consultation Policy to be in compliance with Health and Human Services' policy. This is exciting for us knowing that we will be working closer with tribal leadership and with you to better serve tribal elders and others in tribal communities. So, matter of fact, next week it's my honor to travel with Secretary Price for the next Secretary's Tribal Advisory Council Meeting, which happens to be in the great state of Oklahoma. I look forward to that. And I also look forward to hearing from Cynthia on how your conference goes and some of the issues that you bring forward to her and us and I hope that you have an outstanding conference. And I really look forward to seeing you next year to help you celebrate your 40th Anniversary. Thanks so much.