



OSAGE NATION CONGRESS
ᏊᏊᏊᏊ ᏊᏊᏊᏊ ᏊᏊᏊᏊᏊᏊᏊᏊ
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS
ELI POTTS ~ JOE TILLMAN

Joint Statement- For Immediate Release
Government Shutdown and Nationwide Food Distribution
7/19/21 1:30PM

The Osage Nation-

Addressing a potential Government Shutdown:

We wanted to take a moment to reassure the Osage Nation employees and citizens that, contrary to the Chief's public statement, no shutdown should be required.

The Congress passed a law with more than sufficient notice for the Chief to get the budgetary information in order, and the Chief signed it. "Now he calls an 11th hour special session and threatens to shut the Nation down if we don't pass the budgets, he's given us only a day to discuss- that's irresponsible and unjustly weaponizes the employees of the Nation. It's just wrong" said Congressman Tillman.

Congressman Potts also stated, "there is no reason the Nation would need to shut down. Only programs that are entirely federally funded could have possibly been considered for 'shutdown', but the entire Nation, that's absurd. I think its reckless for the Chief to threaten a 'shutdown' when he's had since May 27th to call a session for the Congress to consider these budgets, yet he chose to give the Congress a single legislative day before the law takes effect, then threatens to send employees home unless Congress approves of his budgets. - that's not working together."

We look forward to the discussion of the federal budgets on the 24th and we hope to work diligently with executive branch employees on that day to process the budgets appropriately and in a way that continues to serve the Osage Nation and its People to the best of our ability.

Regarding ARPA and Nationwide Food Distribution:

We are pleased to announce the potential of a nationwide food distribution partnership that would deliver fresh produce to Osage citizens in every part of the United States on a monthly basis. Such a program would be subject to approval by the Osage Nation Congress and the Chief of the Osage Nation.

Congressman Potts had previously stated;

"Chief Standing Bear said it in his opening remarks [during the 8th Special Session], 'the remaining \$19 billion dollars is allocated to all Indian Nation based on membership enrollment and tribal employment... [and that] Osage Nation membership was submitted as 22,925 and our share of the \$12.35 billion dollars is based on that certified submission.' The notion that only those in Osage county or that not ALL members of the Osage Nation should somehow benefit from these funds is misguided and simply wrong."

We have a responsibility to serve 22,925 citizens with the funds that make up the ARPA distribution from the federal government.

Continued on page 2

CONGRESSMAN ELI POTTS 918.949.0354
CONGRESSMAN JOE TILLMAN 918.277.2538



OSAGE NATION CONGRESS
ᏍᏚᏚᏚ ᏚᏚᏚᏚ ᏚᏚᏚᏚ
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS
ELI POTTS ~ JOE TILLMAN

We would like to recognize the work the Standing Bear Administration has done to strengthen food security within Osage county, but we also recognize that many citizens have yet to realize the benefit of some food sovereignty initiatives.

We have been working with Osages in other parts of the United States to brainstorm and put together a comprehensive plan that has the potential to deliver fresh food to Osage citizens doorstep from coast to coast.

Congressman Tillman said, “not only does this meet every Osage, literally where they live, it provides a healthy food choice. It also serves as a network on which we can build. I see us one day being able to deliver meat from the processing plant in Hominy, produce from Harvest Land, the Osage Language about the food they are about to eat, and to share our culture. The potential is there.”

“We have the opportunity to utilize ARPA funds to develop a system by which we can deliver food directly to our people. What I love most is the ability to customize the boxes for the Osage Nation, share our language and give the Osage people a healthy food alternative” said Congressman Potts.

This announcement comes after consultation with Osage citizens who have spent years working with food sovereignty on a nationwide scale.

The proposal is in conjunction with The Fruit Guys, a nationwide fresh produce delivery group that is willing to partner with the Osage Nation if the Congress sees fit to appropriate monies for such a project. They have experience in nationwide food delivery of fresh produce and have experience in Native communities.

Congressman Potts said, “from the numbers we’ve seen, The Fruit Guys would be able to deliver fresh produce to Osage Citizens doorsteps at an affordable price- The ARPA funds were given to the Nation for us to seek solutions to problems we all face, not just those here in Osage County. We all need better access to healthier foods and this is exactly the type of program that we can build on to create future economic opportunities for our people.”

“These numbers are incredible, and we look forward to being able to discuss them in an open meeting with the rest of Congress. The Osage Nation can deliver two boxes a month to every elder for as little as \$2,000,000 or we can deliver one box a month to every citizen 18+ for the next two years for only \$5,000,000! We spent \$8,000,000 to build a meat processing plant, surely we can support \$5,000,000 to ensure food is delivered on a monthly basis to Osage Citizens from Sitka Alaska to Shidler Oklahoma and from Pensacola Florida to Pawhuska Oklahoma!” said Congressman Tillman.

Continued on Page 3

CONGRESSMAN ELI POTTS 918.949.0354
CONGRESSMAN JOE TILLMAN 918.277.2538



OSAGE NATION CONGRESS
ᏍᏚᏚᏚ ᏚᏚᏚᏚ ᏚᏚᏚᏚᏚᏚ
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS
ELI POTTS ~ JOE TILLMAN

This program has such great potential!

The Nation can utilize this type of program with our existing infrastructure, Osage Nation Food Distribution, to establish local drop off points throughout Osage county on a monthly basis.

“These drop off points would allow for cost savings on a monthly basis but would more importantly serve as a gathering of our people throughout the Nation for a common and worthy cause, to improve access to quality healthy food! Furthermore, we can gather, share stories, share recipes, sell other goods, we can create an entire micro economy based around the topic of healthy food! How exciting is that!” said Congressman Potts.

Congressman Potts concluded, “I’ll be introducing a bill this week to fund this initiative, and I will be requesting it be added to the Special Session proclamation for the 24th. While we are discussing how to spend the ARPA funds, I believe we should be discussing all of the options that are on the table, especially those that include putting food on people’s table.”

Congressman Tillman continued, “I certainly hope we can come together and get behind such a neat idea that could help build a healthier Osage Nation for years to come”.

The Fruit Guys.
<https://fruitguys.com>

CONGRESSMAN ELI POTTS 918.949.0354
CONGRESSMAN JOE TILLMAN 918.277.2538