



International Association for Indigenous Aging

NEWS RELEASE

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The International Association for Indigenous Aging (IA²) brought American Indian/ Alaska Native (AI/AN) concerns about the future of Social Security before the Social Security Acting Commissioner and other top Social Security Administration (SSA) officials today at an AI/AN Roundtable discussion sponsored by SSA. The meeting took place at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.

The invitation-only event was designed as a listening session with "esteemed representatives of the Tribal community." The meeting was attended by about ten organizations, along with numerous attendees via telephone.

IA² represented the only voice at the roundtable speaking about AI/AN elders and Social Security on a national level and the need for outreach to AI/AN elders.

IA² Executive Director Dave Baldrige encouraged SSA to establish partnerships with Indian elder advocacy organizations and other national organizations that work on Social Security and Indian elder issues.

Baldrige emphasized the need for personal contact with groups of elders on reservations. SSA said it had created video service terminal sites in tribal communities in five of its regions around the country (<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/aian/vsd-sites.ppt>). SSA also said it had created an Internet site for AI/ANs (<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/aian>).

In 2011, with funding from the National Academy for Social Insurance, IA² created a national resolution about AI/AN elders and Social Security that was endorsed by the National Congress of American Indians representing more than 550 tribes across the United States. The IA² project leveraged the voices of AI/AN elders at the grassroots level and brought their concerns to the national level about proposals that might raise the retirement age or endanger Social Security's solvency.

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