



KIOWA TRIBE

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OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATURE

March 31, 2025

STATEMENT FROM THE LEGISLATURE

On February 3, 2025, the Legislature received an email from the Executive Assistant to the Chairman containing the Executive Branch's finalized budget proposal for the 2026 Fiscal Year. However, according to the Kiowa Constitution, the Chairman must submit the budget to the Legislature by February 1st of each year without exception. Because the Executive Branch missed this deadline, the Legislature cannot legally advance the late submission to the ballot. Instead, as empowered by the Constitution, the Legislature will develop its own budget in accordance with the standard Legislative Process ahead of the beginning of the new fiscal year in July.

The Legislature is committed to creating a budget that best serves the interests of the Kiowa people. Through discussions with the Executive Branch, the Legislature has conceived of and successfully advocated for several key initiatives, including:

1. A 29% increase in Emergency Assistance funding to help Kiowa families facing unexpected financial hardships and the rising cost of living.
2. A \$220,000 Back-to-School Assistance fund to support families with school expenses.
3. A \$200,000 Emergency Response Fund to provide resources for temporary housing and repairs in the event of a natural disaster.
4. A 200% increase in the Kiowa Princess stipend to recognize the dedication and sacrifices of families supporting the role.
5. More transparency in funding for the Elder Payment to maintain the \$1,000 disbursement.

While these are positive steps, the Legislature has concerns about other aspects of the Chairman's budget proposal, particularly how salary increases for Tribe employees have been distributed. Most employees were given a 3% cost-of-living adjustment, but a select few are set to receive raises between 8.05% and 17.02%. Some positions have already seen drastic increases, with one salary rising by 50% from 2023 to the Chairman's 2026 proposal – and a second by 46.9%.

Additionally, the Legislature has requested information from the Executive Branch about an ongoing federal investigation into \$8.53 million in questionable expenditures of COVID-19 relief funds. It is also seeking details about the Tribe's gaming operations and a defunct screen-printing business, as these financial issues impact the Tribe's overall budget.

In a public address on March 29, 2025, Chairman Spottedbird expressed concern that the Legislature is not working with him, stating that it feels like they are "fighting against" him. He suggested that the Legislature is not acting with the ethical guidance of Daw'ke.

The Legislature firmly believes that the Kiowa people deserve transparency and facts, not vague accusations. While Chairman Spottedbird was elected by 864 voters (8.26% of the Tribe's population) to lead the Executive Branch, the Legislature was also elected to serve as a coequal branch responsible for stewarding the Tribe's finances. The Legislature remains committed to fulfilling this responsibility with the seriousness it deserves.

The Legislature encourages all Kiowa citizens to stay engaged and reach out with any questions or concerns. Contact information for each legislative office is available at www.kiowatribe.org/legislative. The Legislature looks forward to working with the Chairman and the Executive Branch to build a future that benefits all Kiowa people.

In service to our citizens,



Michael Primus
Speaker of the Legislature
The Kiowa Tribal Legislature