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Bozho,

It is significant that the Chairman of our nation, John Barrett, is also a board member of the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission. His term is 2007 through 2010.

The Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission recently celebrated its 41<sup>st</sup> year of existence as a state agency. The commission serves as the single point of contact between state government and Oklahoma's Indian Nations.

The commission's statutory mission is to serve as the liaison between the American Indian citizens of the state, tribal leaders, tribal governments, private sector entities, various Federal and State agencies, and the Executive and Legislative branches of Oklahoma state government.

The four primary goals of the Commission are: (1) Create State and Federal Legislation; (2) Create an Advisory Committee; (3) Develop and Implement Research Projects and Reports; and (4) Develop Cooperative Programs between Tribes and State, Federal, & Local governments, Private Entities, Health Organizations, Educational Agencies, Tourism, and Economic Development Entities.

I have enjoyed good relations with the Commission and its Executive Director, Barbara Warner. I look forward to working with our chairman and the other members on important issues for our tribe and state. If you would like to know more about this important agency, their Web site is:

[www.oiac.ok.gov](http://www.oiac.ok.gov).

Megwetch,  
Paul Wesselhoft  
Representative, District #9

*The Nation's Chairmanship*

The campaign for the Chairmanship of our nation is upon us. Putting personalities aside, I would like to address the most important policy issue which differentiates the three candidates - our children's and grandchildren's future. One candidate looks to the future, the other two look to the present.

There is not a more important policy for our nation and her legislature than the academic, professional, or technical education of our citizens! Our Nation will only financially prosper and contribute to society as we provide its members opportunities to earn either college or Career Technology degrees or diplomas.

Not everyone is meant to go to college, but all of our kids need to obtain a professional status that can give them and their families a good living. Sometimes, this professional status is accomplished with college degrees; other times, it is accomplished with vocational school diplomas.

Our Nation provides more than 1,500 scholarships each semester. This figure must increase, never decrease. We are, indeed, educating our children for an extremely competitive world. Our citizens need school, and more school, in order to keep up with the ever-increasing demand of the global market. Without such education - academic, professional or technical - our citizens will find themselves without employment, period!

Again, there is not a more important National and legislative policy than providing scholarships for academic, professional, or technical degrees or diplomas.

Two of our candidates (focused on the present) would spend much of our Nation's resources elsewhere; this would, de facto, decrease scholarships. Folks, we of the legislature have only so much money to appropriate. The other candidate (focused on our future) would continue to increase scholarships because he knows the higher importance of educating our citizens for a global economy.

I hope we do not succumb to the temptation of candidates who pander to the present; we ought to, instead, support the candidate who holds our future in his hands.

Megwetch,  
Paul Wesselhoft  
Rep., District #9