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Crow and the State of Montana Signing Ceremony

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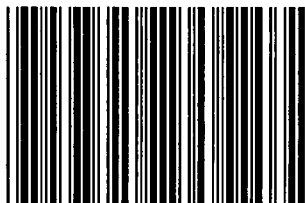
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BAUCUS

Crow & the State of Montana
Signing Ceremony
Remarks of Senator Max Baucus
February 6, 2008

The Ojibwa [O Jib Way] Chief George Copway

[Cop Way] said:

“Among the Indians, there have been no written laws. Customs handed down from generation to generation have been the only laws to guide them. Every one might act different from what was considered right if he chose to do so, but such acts would bring upon him the censure of the Nation. This fear of the Nation’s censure acted as a mighty band, binding all in one social, honorable compact.”

Today, we have written laws. And today, we have an honorable compact.

We are gathered today, appropriately, in the Mansfield Room of the U.S. Capitol. Since Senator Mansfield's time in the Senate, we have been able to make historic advances between the State of Montana and the Indian Nations of Montana.

Today, we honor and witness the signing of a Compact between the Crow Nation and the State of Montana. This Compact will protect the rights of creditors and debtors alike. And thus this Compact will allow the Crow Nation to advance its economic and housing development.

No longer will businesses have any reason for concern about working with the reservations. No longer will Native-owned businesses feel encumbered when they make purchases on credit from non-Native lenders. No longer will the business community wonder if their transactions are secured.

Because of this Compact, Tribal enterprises will have access to affordable credit to conduct their businesses. At a time when Federal programs are cutting back and grant money is nearly unavailable, this Compact is a timely advance.

Today's signing is another example of the Tribal Nations and the State of Montana working together to accomplish a common good. Affordable credit and security of rights make today's signing a significant step.

And so, I commend the Crow Nation and the State of Montana for entering into this Compact. I commend them for agreeing to this written law. And I commend them on reaching this honorable compact.