



# St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### TRIBAL CHIEF JAMES RANSOM ATTENDS WHITE HOUSE *TRIBAL NATIONS* CONFERENCE

*Tribal Representatives Discuss Variety of Issues*

**Akwesasne Territory**— On Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009, St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Chief James Ransom attended the White House Tribal Nations Conference. As part of President Obama's outreach efforts, this conference provides the opportunity for leaders from the 564 federally recognized tribes to interact directly with the President and representatives from the highest levels of his Administration. The Obama Administration invited each federally recognized tribe to send one representative to the conference.

"This is part of the President's efforts to have a more open dialog between the administration in Washington and Indian Tribes," observed Chief Ransom. "I'm pleased to be part of this process. I hope that our discussions are meaningful and address issues in a practical manner." Ransom also participated in the earlier White House Conference in August, 2009.

Some of the issues that affect the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe are the Indian Health Care Improvement Act and the funding of Tribal infrastructure projects including the Diabetes Wellness Center, the Broadband project, and the establishment of a Rural Electrical Cooperative as the Tribal Electrical Utility. "While we can't expect to get immediate resolution to any tribal issues, I brought some issues to the table that are important to our community," Ransom remarked. "I also discussed enhanced Tribal ID cards to be used for border crossing. This seems to be an unfunded mandate."

President Obama delivered opening and closing remarks and participate in an interactive discussion with tribal leaders. Other interactive discussions in the areas of economic development and natural resources; public safety and housing; and education, health and labor were led by representatives from the highest levels of the Administration. A variety of Administration officials attended including Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, Energy Secretary Steven Chu, Education Secretary Arne Duncan, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, Deputy Attorney General David Ogden, Housing and Urban Development Deputy Secretary Ronald Sims, Department of Homeland Security Deputy Secretary Jane Lute, Associate Attorney General Tom Perrelli, and Indian Health Service Director Dr. Yvette Robideaux.

The White House Tribal Nations Conference was streamed live on the internet.

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The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the St. Regis Mohawk People.

**Helping Build A Better Tomorrow**

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