

President Trump Strikes a Chord With Tribal Leaders

As promised Tuesday, President Donald Trump met with governors and tribal and local leaders with Secretary of Energy Rick Perry and EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt at the White House for a roundtable listening session about ways to improve America's energy independence.

And while the president was happy to hear from all of the leaders in the room, he had a special message to the Native American leaders who came to visit.

"I'm proud to have such a large gathering of tribal leaders here at the White House," he said. "I look forward to more government-to-government consultations with tribal leaders about the issues important to Indian Country ...

"Many of your lands have rich, natural resources that stand to benefit your people immensely. These untapped resources of wealth can help you build new schools, fix roads, improve your communities, and create jobs—jobs like you've never seen before. All you want is the freedom to use them, and that's been the problem. It's been very difficult, hasn't it? It will be a lot easier now under the Trump administration.

"For too long the federal government has put up restrictions and regulations that put this energy wealth out of reach. It's just totally out of reach. It's been really restricted, the development itself has been restricted, and vast amounts of deposits of coal and other resources have, in a way, been taken out of your hands. And we're going to have that changed. We're going to put it back in your hands.

"These infringements on tribal sovereignty are deeply unfair to Native Americans and Native American communities who are being denied access to the energy and wealth that they have on

their own lands. Many of our states have also been denied access to the abundant energy resources on their lands that could bring greater wealth to the people and benefit to our whole nation. We're becoming more and more energy-dominant. I don't want to be energy-free, we want to be energy-dominant in terms of the world."

You can watch the entire speech in the video clip above. {eoa}