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Secretary JR LaPlante Elected President of Governor's Interstate Indian Council

PIERRE, S.D. – On Sept. 27, delegates to the Governor's Interstate Indian Council (GIIC) in Tulsa, Oklahoma elected JR LaPlante, South Dakota Secretary of Tribal Relations, to serve as the GIIC president for 2013-2014.

"I am humbled to have been elected and look forward to serving with my fellow delegates," Secretary LaPlante said.

LaPlante was appointed Secretary of Tribal Relations in 2011 by Gov. Dennis Daugaard to lead the newly created South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations.

The GIIC was formed in 1949, and includes state Indian Affairs Offices, Commissions and Departments from across the country. The mission of GIIC is to promote and enhance government-to-government relations between the tribes and states; respect and recognize the individual sovereignty of the tribes and the states; support the preservation of traditional Indian culture, language and values; and encourage socioeconomic development aimed at tribal self-sufficiency.

Council delegates elected Chris Howell of Kansas' Native American Affairs Office to serve as vice president and the Nevada Indian Commission's Sherry Rupert to serve as secretary/treasurer.

The Department of Tribal Relations can be contacted at 605.773.3415 or online at <http://www.sdtribalrelations.com/contact.aspx>.

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