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[00:00:21] **Speaker 1** The 11 tribal nations in Wisconsin have dozens of federal grant programs, including nearly $3 billion for tribal health, 14 million for broadband, and more than 10 million connected to tribal colleges. Just how vulnerable is this funding and how might treaty rights be violated? Violated, not to mention the services provided if it gets wiped away. We turn to Darcy Hill, chairman of the Oneida Nation, for his take. And, Chairman, thanks very much for being here.

[00:00:51] **Speaker 2** Yes, thank you for the invitation.

[00:00:53] **Speaker 1** So for the Oneida, what would be potential impacts of any federal funding freeze?

[00:01:01] **Speaker 2** Yeah, it could be. They could be quite large depending on how they're rolled out and the particulars. So at Oneida, a very large portion of our budget actually comes from federal and state grants. So it's just quite clear that would be very detrimental to our community and for the levels and for families and all that we take care of here in our neighbor.

[00:01:24] **Speaker 1** And do these grants impact different tribal nations differently?

[00:01:31] **Speaker 2** It all depends on what they've been applied for and granted at that point. And so continuing to monitor each tribe individually obviously knows what grants they've been went through the process to receive and or other funding mechanisms through through federal laws.

[00:01:53] **Speaker 1** When you got word that there was this pause or freeze on these grant and loan programs, what was your reaction?

[00:02:04] **Speaker 2** Well, you know, at first it was well, let's hope it's not as bad as it's being made out to be. Obviously, as it comes to tribal nations and how we're affected by the federal dollar and government shutdowns and freezes like this is a little bit different per say, just depending on what those lines that are frozen and how they impact to the nation. And so, you know, it's definitely okay, Let's let's see what happens with this, how these different departments are handling this presidential order or this hiring freeze or not hiring freeze, but to give grants and loans and see what exactly those effects are on us.

[00:02:49] **Speaker 1** What about the piece that are binding commitments in sovereign tribal nations based on treaty and trust obligations from land exchange hundreds of years ago?

[00:03:03] **Speaker 2** Yeah, that's always the worry. You know, obviously, tribal nations that see, you know, upwards of 2 billion acres of land to the birth of the United States. And in exchange for that land was, you know, promises that we battled every day to hold the United States accountable to the promises they made to our ancestors for that transaction. And so that's that's an everyday battle, no matter who the president is or who's in Congress. Tribes stand up together to fight, fight those battles and do that education where necessary to be able to bring to light those issues when it comes to funding for tribal nations.

[00:03:45] **Speaker 1** It is. Does this move seem somehow different or setting an alarming precedent in your mind?

[00:03:54] **Speaker 2** I think it is alarming to a certain extent, just because a lot of the president's orders are pretty broad. And so they're not specific enough for us to be able to analyze and be like, okay, this is how it's going to affect us, because a lot of it is just left up to the discretion of either political appointees or long term employees who don't necessarily have the authority to make the decisions that they normally would during these transition period. So it's really, you know, kind of like a wait and see at this point how those decisions are made and they trickle down through the system to have effect on tribal nations.

[00:04:36] **Speaker 1** As to executive orders coming out of Washington. We've seen reported that some tribal members have been detained in immigration sweeps. Is that something that you're aware of in the Oneida or across the state?

[00:04:53] **Speaker 2** I haven't have know been able to verify any Oneida tribal members being detained or even checked at this point. I know another tribe in the state said that they had some of their tribal members checked but not detained, just verifying their ID and and let you know, continue on their way to where they were heading. But for for us, we haven't had any verified accounts of anyone actually being detained.

[00:05:21] **Speaker 1** Is it perversely in question that all Native Americans born in the U.S.? Are citizens as to this birthright citizenship issue?

[00:05:33] **Speaker 2** Yeah. You know, the Snyder Act passed in 1924, so it's 100 year old law. And so I don't think that's really in question. It would obviously take an act of Congress to reverse that decision or the Supreme Court to change these types of things. And so those are kind of long processes that would probably see legal battle the entire way, you know, along the way it's processed to the Supreme Court. And so I think that's just a longstanding law that I don't think is in any question right now. But it is in the back of some people's minds as a threat to tribal sovereignty. But I think at this point, it's it's a long ways off.

[00:06:21] **Speaker 1** That's good news. Chairman Hill, thanks very much.

[00:06:26] **Speaker 2** All right. Thank you.

[00:06:32] **Speaker 1** Thank you. We'll see. We'll see what happens because I'm still a little confused about what is happening with that federal freeze and whether it's on or off. It seems that it's off, but they want it to be on. So we'll see what happens.

[00:06:53] **Speaker 2** Yeah, you know, that's kind of the stance we've been taking with a lot of these presidential orders is just making sure that we're aware of them and then tracking should they have an impact on the nation so that we can confer with our Wisconsin delegation to either who may have the president's ear and be able to get things changed as quickly as possible, like what happened with the with the spending freeze, essentially?

[00:07:24] **Speaker 1** Yeah. Did you reach out to the congressional delegation on that?

[00:07:29] **Speaker 2** Yeah, we yeah, we definitely did. And we're still in the process of, you know, reaching out to some of them. But early on, we did reach out to a couple of them who were obviously tenured ones who who are in the everyday aspect of this. And we're still continuing to reach out to the more newly elected ones. So let them know our stances and positions and, you know, kind of the the ins and outs of how, you know, federal government relationship is to tribal nations and how the funding works and how detrimental such things as this. This order was not being clear how it affected and who it affected.

[00:08:07] **Speaker 1** Yeah, a little bit of education along the way, Yeah. All right. All right. Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

[00:08:15] **Speaker 2** All right. You're welcome.