

## **Summary: Indian Community Councilman Failed to Pay Lease Fees**

**Report Date: January 24, 2018**

The OIG investigated allegations that an Indian community councilman failed to pay the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) the required fees associated with farming and grazing leases on an Indian reservation.

Our investigation determined the councilman failed to pay the required fees for his leases from 2008 to 2014, resulting in a \$135,375 delinquency owed to the affected tribe. The councilman admitted to the tribal council that he had not paid his lease fees and agreed to pay the tribe \$13,537 each year for 10 years. We also determined that the BIA Realty Office was aware in 2013 that the councilman had not paid the required fees and subsequently canceled the councilman's leases for nonpayment.

As the councilman had entered into a repayment plan and BIA had canceled his leases, we closed our investigation. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Montana declined to prosecute.

This is a summary of a report of investigation that we provided to the Director of the BIA.

