

GOVERNOR ENCOURAGES OKLAHOMANS TO WATCH NATIONAL TELECAST OF STATE'S HISTORY

By Brandon Webb
Staff Writer

■(GIT) At a Friday afternoon press conference, Governor Frank Keating encouraged teachers, students, business leaders and all Oklahomans to watch the historic national premier of "Oklahoma: Native America." Saturday, November 16 is Oklahoma's Statehood Day and The Nashville Network will televise the hour-long Statehood Day presentation that evening from 9:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. TNN reaches over 65 million homes in the United States and 6 million homes in Canada. Governor Keating hopes each of these households turn on to see the hour-long tribute to Oklahoma's heritage and achievements.

Developed as a part of the "Oklahoma: Native America" tourism campaign, the show debuted one year ago on Oklahoma's 1995 Statehood Day. Ten television stations statewide including OETA have broadcast the program. The special celebrates the state's diverse and scenic terrain, its unique heritage and character, and many nationally acclaimed native sons and daughters. Four years in the making, the presentation draws on more than 400 hours of footage, and recognizes about 100 hometowns.

"This is a great opportunity for the rest of the nation, as well as those Oklahomans who missed seeing it last year, to see and hear about our magnificent state and the wonderful heritage of Oklahoma," Keating said. "Now the rest of the nation will know what we already know about our state — Oklahoma is a great state. I want to congratulate all those involved for their hard work and dedication to this project. It is a wonderful tribute to them that the rest of the country will now see the fruits of their labor."

Brian Hughes, TNN vice president of programming added, "Whatever mental image a person may have of this region, many people will be pleasantly surprised at what they see in this special. Oklahoma has made some enormous contributions to the history, leadership, and quality of life in our country."

"The best blood will sometimes get into a fool or a mosquito."

Austin O'Malley

DOT TO PIONEER FEDERAL USE OF PROFESSIONAL TRAVEL ADVICE AND MANAGEMENT

From U.S. Dept. of Transportation

■(WASHINGTON) The Department of Transportation has asked for comment on a draft request for proposals (RFP) which would make DOT the first federal agency to establish a fee-based arrangement with its travel services contractor and use incentives for improving the quality of travel services.

Relying on the professional knowledge and skill of contract travel managers, DOT will improve accommodations for its employees on official travel and at the same time cut costs, the department said.

"This innovation will save costs, improve travel services and make the department operate more like a private business," Secretary of Transportation Federico Pena said. "I applaud our staff for moving forward on this important project."

First conceived a year ago, the draft RFP incorporates rapidly evolving travel reservation automation technology and a flexible fee structure. The fee structure is designed to promote the traveler's use of automation by setting lower fees for automated self-made reservations.

A pace-setting incentive system is designed to award bonuses to DOT's professional contract travel managers who manage DOT's trips efficiently, improving the quality of a traveler's accommodations while reducing overall costs. This moves DOT away from the conventional rebate/commis-

sion structure which rewards travel agencies when more is spent on travel, not less.

The department said that it wants to transform transaction-oriented travel services into a dynamic ensemble of professional contract travel advisers dedicated to educating DOT travelers and negotiating arrangements that maximize the use of federal funds. Under this system, contract travel managers will be compensated for their expertise and results, creating for the first time a relationship that aligns the interest of the taxpayers and travel agencies.

The contractor will be rewarded for achieving costs savings from air fares that are lower than government rates, including the use of restricted tickets, fare sales, group travel opportunities, coupon offerings and consolidator fares. They also will be encouraged to increase the use of negotiated hotel, car and airline rates and to take advantage of frequent traveler programs for high-frequency travelers. DOT and the contractor will share cost savings.

The draft RFP is available electronically via the Internet at <http://www.dot.gov/ost/m60/dotrft.htm>. A pre-solicitation meeting will be held Nov. 22 in room 2230 of the DOT headquarters, 400 7th St., S.W., Washington, D.C., from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Offerors are limited to three representatives. Pre-registration is required. To pre-register, call Pat Hanson at (202) 366-4976.

