

National Indian
Health Board

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difference for communities and families!



Legislative Action Alert

January 26, 2010

Speak up for INDIAN COUNTRY on
IHCIA in Health Care Reform

Help is **URGENTLY** needed **TODAY** to ask your Representative to sign on to the attached letter addressed to Speaker Pelosi.

This “Dear Colleague” letter asks the Speaker to retain the IHCIA in the final health care reform package. The letter states:

It is a trust obligation of the federal government to provide for the wellness of our tribal communities. As Congress works toward addressing health care reform, it is vital that reauthorization of the IHCIA is retained in the final product.

The letter was prepared by Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (D-1st, AZ.) The deadline for your representative to contact Kirkpatrick’s office to sign on to this letter is **THIS THURSDAY, January 28 by 5 pm ET.**

What You Can Do: Contact your House of Representative member **immediately** and request your member to sign on to Rep. Kirkpatrick’s letter.

Congressional Switchboard: 1 (800) 828-0498 or (202) 224-3121

QUESTIONS: Please contact NIHB’s Legislative Director, Jennifer Cooper at (202) 507-4076.

Copy of the Letter:

January 29, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

As you know, final passage of H.R. 3962, The Affordable Health Care for America Act, and H.R. 3590, The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act as passed by the Senate, included reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA). If included in the final health reform bill, the IHCIA would sustain, expand, and modernize the Indian Health Service (IHS), which provides comprehensive health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives. Legislation to reauthorize the IHCIA has been pending before the Congress since 1999, and enacting this long-overdue reauthorization will provide much needed improvements and certainty to the delivery of Indian health services.

Enormous disparities in accessing high-quality health care exist in Indian Country. The best way to move toward health care parity for tribal communities is to ensure that Indian health care providers are able to participate equally in the health care delivery system. IHCIA would bring us closer to that goal. At the same time, it is essential that health insurance reform respects and fulfills the federal responsibility to provide quality health care to Native Americans, while remaining sensitive to American Indian, Alaska Native, and Indian health providers' unique needs.

It is a trust obligation of the federal government to provide for the wellness of our tribal communities. As Congress works toward addressing health care reform, it is vital that reauthorization of the IHCIA is retained in the final product.

Thank you for your consideration.