

**Sample Letter to Member re: Appropriations**

April XX, 2010

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States House of Representatives

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_

As Congress considers appropriations for the Interior and the Environment, I urge you to support increased funds for the Indian Health Service (IHS).

The enactment of health care reform will positively impact American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), includes the permanent authorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA).

The IHS has been chronically underfunded, at an estimated 50 percent of need. This has resulted in unacceptable health disparities for AI/ANs resulting in a lack of upholding treaty obligations and trust responsibilities of the Federal government.

The reauthorization of the IHCIA will allow critical services to be offered within the IHS system for the first time, such as cancer screenings and long-term care for our elders.

I understand the difficult budget outlook, and that with health care reform there may be an assumption that access to health care for AI/ANs will not be an issue, but our need for Congress to increase appropriations for IHS remains. Please support increased funds for the IHS as part of the Interior and Environment appropriations bill.

Respectfully,

Cc: Dennis Worden, National Indian Health Board