



13-10
August 2, 2010

**House Interior-Environment
Subcommittee Approves Spending
Measure**

Last week, the House Interior-Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee approved legislation for the Fiscal Year 2011 (FY11) funding. The Interior appropriations bill includes the Indian Health Service (IHS) account. The Interior subcommittee approved funding for IHS at the President's budget request of \$4.4 billion. This is an 8.7 percent increase over the previous fiscal year. The IHS budget represents the largest increase in the Interior appropriations bill.

The legislation was supported by both the majority and minority parties of the Interior subcommittee, with strong support for the IHS funding. The bill will next be considered by the full appropriations committee in the House, and then will be considered on the floor of the House.

The Senate Interior Subcommittee has yet to meet to consider its legislation. FY11 begins on October 1, 2010.

**HHS Initiates Tribal Consultation on
Strategic Plan**

The Department of Health and Human Services is seeking consultation on its strategic plan. The department reviews its plan every three years, and is seeking input from Tribes.

HHS highlighted material under its first goal, Transform Health Care, and Objective E, Ensure access to quality, culturally competent care for vulnerable populations, as particular interest to Tribes. Comments from Tribal leaders are to be submitted by August 14, 2010.

In addition to the consultation, HHS will hold two phone calls with Tribal members, Tribal leaders and Tribal and urban Indian organizations. The calls are scheduled for August 3 and August 5 from 3:00-5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. The phone calls will provide an overview of the plan and offer the opportunity for participants to share preliminary thoughts and ask question. Call in information: 866-541-2289 call in code: 634876.



A copy of the Dear Tribal Leader letter, as well as a copy of the strategic plan, is available on NIHB's Tribal Consultation section of www.nihb.gov.

Dorgan Leads Summit on Youth Suicide

Senator Dorgan (ND), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, led a summit on youth suicide in Washington, DC. Tribal leaders, policy experts, Administration officials, national organizations and tribal youth gathered for the meeting to discuss the problem and develop action items to address it. Senator Mike Johanns (NE) also attended the youth suicide summit and participated in discussion by listening to the participants' conversation.

Youth suicide rates in Indian Country occur at twice the rate of the second leading population group, and has been recognized as an epidemic. Senator Dorgan convened the meeting, not to "nibble around the problem" but to take steps in addressing the issues.



Senator Dorgan leads a discussion on youth suicide in Indian Country

Tribal youth discussed the issue from their perspective and provided feedback to Senator Dorgan and others. The meeting concluded with participants developing action items for the committee to move forward with, and a brainstorming session.

House Begins August Work Period

The House of Representatives adjourned for a six week district work period beginning last weekend. The Senate will remain in session this week before departing for the recess. Prior to leaving, both chambers worked to finish last minute business, including supplemental appropriations for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

District work periods provide the opportunity for Tribal leaders and Tribal members to meet with their elected representatives to the House of Representatives and the United States Senate. For information about potential town halls or opportunities to schedule meetings with Representatives and Senators, visit www.house.gov and www.senate.gov for contact information and information that may be available on member websites.

The House of Representatives and the Senate will reconvene in mid-September, the week of September 13, leaving two weeks before the beginning of the fiscal year.

No appropriations bills have yet passed the full House, meaning that all 12 appropriations bills in the House, and the Senate, have yet to be considered. This means a continuing resolution is likely when Congress returns.



TTAG, MMPC, Meet in DC for Face-to-Face

Last week, the CMS Tribal Technical Advisory Group (TTAG) and the Medicare and Medicaid Policy Committee (MMPC) held its quarterly face to face meeting in Washington, DC. The new CMS Administrator, Dr. Donald Berwick met with the TTAG and spoke about his commitment to honoring tribal sovereignty and to closing health disparities.



H. Sally Smith Greets Dr. Berwick

Also, the IHS Director, Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, was in attendance at the TTAG meeting and updated the group on her four director priorities and the implementation of the IHCIA. She stated that the IHS is working on implementation and since the IHCIA is a piece of the Affordable Care Act, there is a little more of a review process before provisions can be implemented. She spoke about the recently released IHS Tribal Leader Letter, which is the first in the series. During the meetings, the TTAG and MMPC reviewed and discussed many of the new provisions in the IHCIA and Affordable Care Act and reviewed many other issues that fall under the jurisdiction of the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare.

27th Annual Consumer Conference Approaching in September

The National Indian Health Board will host its 27th Annual Consumer Conference September 20-24 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The theme of this year's conference is "Tribal-State Relations and American Indian/Alaska Native Health Care." In addition to focusing on Tribal-State relations, the conference will also address the Affordable Care Act and the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, issues related to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and a Tribal town-hall event.

Invitees include the Director of the Indian Health Service, the Director of the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Director for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, First Lady Mrs. Obama, Governors, Secretary Sebelius and more.

For additional information about the conference, visit:

http://www.nihb.org/communications/conferences_events.php, to register for the conference visit: <https://secure.events-registration.com/nihbacc2010/>.

The National Indian Health Board is accepting calls for proposals as well as for vendors. For information, please visit http://www.nihb.org/communications/conferences_events.php for additional information. The deadline to submit proposals is August 23, 2010.

For questions regarding the conference, please contact Krystin Poitra at kpoitra@nihb.org.



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

National Indian
Health Board

Presents



The 27th Annual Consumer Conference

**Tribal-State Relations and
American Indian/Alaska Native
Health Care**

Hosted by the Tribes of the Aberdeen Area
Through Aberdeen Area Tribal Chairman's Health Board

**September
20-24, 2010**

Best Western Ramkota Hotel
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

For more information visit www.nihb.org

