



National Indian Health Board

1940 Duke St., Suite 200

Alexandria, VA

Website: www.nihb.org

**GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN
NATIONAL INDIAN HEALTH BOARD**

March 2008

Welcome Friends, Colleagues and Supporters!

Thank you for attending the National Indian Health Board's (NIHB) 1st Annual National Tribal Appropriation Summit. This is a new beginning.

The idea for the summit grew out of the NIHB's 2007 Board retreat when Board members embraced the possibility of expanding the focus of its policy and advocacy work to reach beyond authorizing, budget preparation and consultation. We acknowledged that as long as congressional appropriations to the Indian Health Service provide only 60% of Tribal health care needs, perhaps it's time to take a more sophisticated and dedicated approach to the appropriations process.

Since that time the NIHB Board and staff have been working diligently to bring together the key Members of Congress, congressional staff, and industry and tribal experts to give you the information and tools you will need to be a warrior for American Indian and Alaska Native Health Care Appropriations. The result of that work is this Summit.

Please utilize the first edition of the NIHB Tribal Appropriations Toolkit. In the toolkit, you are provided with basic information about how a bill becomes law, appropriations committee contact information, tips about preparing testimony and much more. At NIHB, it is important to us that you we provide you with the tools necessary to assist you in becoming an effective Indian health care advocate. Our resource guide is one tool that can assist with that effort. You may also rely on our staff and website for support.

As long as American Indian and Alaska Native health care is not an entitlement program, we must ask Congress for funding every year through the annual appropriations process. Thank you for being here today so that we can begin this journey together.

Yours in Health,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Sally Smith'.

H. Sally Smith, Chairman
National Indian Health Board