



# Legislative Action Alert

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## Sen. Udall Introduces Tribal Public Health Preparedness Bill

*Bill would ensure Tribes can access critical CDC resources to prepare for public health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2020

## Sen. Udall Introduces Tribal Public Health Security and Preparedness Bill

Today Thursday March 12, U.S. Senator Tom Udall (D-NM), Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, introduced the CDC Tribal Public Health Security and Preparedness Act. This legislation would ensure Tribes have direct access to Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Under current law, Tribes are not eligible to apply for PHEP funds. The bill includes a baseline requirement to fund at least ten Tribes for emergency preparedness, and also exempts Tribes from having to put forth any matching funds. In addition, the bill waives many of the onerous reporting requirements that are imposed on state PHEP grantees. **The full text of the CDC Tribal Public Health Security and Preparedness Act is available [here](#).**

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, NIHB is working to ensure swift passage of the legislation. NIHB continues to strongly advocate for a significantly higher set-aside of PHEP funding for Tribes and Tribal organizations to ensure more robust and comprehensive access to funds across Indian Country.

“We need to ensure that Tribes have the same access to resources as everyone else to face down public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. While the Indian Health Service serves as the primary federal agency charged with providing healthcare in Indian Country, all federal agencies - including the CDC - share equally in the requirement to fulfill our trust and treaty obligations,” **said Udall**. “This new legislation will improve Tribal access to federal resources meant to help communities better prepare for public health emergencies...”

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### **NIHB Coronavirus Survey**

NIHB is asking for Tribes' assistance in assessing the coronavirus prevention and response capacity in Indian Country. We are asking for this information because NIHB has the opportunity to share information on Tribal needs and advocate for resources with both the Congress and Administration.

To ensure that these efforts have the best possible impact, NIHB is gathering key information from as many Tribes as possible to create a comprehensive profile of what is needed. **We ask that you please consider the questions at the link below and share any information you can with NIHB.** This survey should take about 5-10 minutes to complete. You can access the survey [here](#).

### **IHS All Tribes COVID-19 Conference Call**

The Indian Health Service is hosting weekly All Tribes calls to provide updates on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) for Tribal and Urban Indian Organization Leaders. Officials will provide an overview of COVID-19, preparedness efforts, and U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps officer deployments. You will have an opportunity to provide comments and ask questions to federal officials.

**Date:** Thursday, March 19, 2020

**Time:** 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM (Eastern)

**Conference Call:** 800-857-5577

**Participant Passcode:** 6703929

**Webinar Adobe Connect:** <https://ihs.cosocloud.com/r4k6jib09mj/>

**Participant Password:** ihs123

For any questions on Congressional measures regarding COVID-19, please contact NIHB Director of Congressional Relations, Shervin Aazami, at [saazami@nihb.org](mailto:saazami@nihb.org)

**National Indian Health Board | [www.nihb.org](http://www.nihb.org)**

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