



Legislative Action Alert

March 5, 2012

Ask Congress: Sign onto a Support Letter for the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI)

Background: Congress established the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) in 1997 for the prevention and treatment of diabetes in American Indian and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs). AI/ANs have the highest rates of type 2 diabetes in the United States, 2.8 times higher than the U.S. general population. The SDPI is currently funded at \$150 million per year through Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. **The program will expire in 2013 unless it is reauthorized.** To ensure uninterrupted funding for SDPI, it is crucial that Congress pass a reauthorization this year. SDPI proves that federal investment in community-driven, culturally-appropriate prevention programs has immensely positive results:

- Average blood sugar levels among the AI/AN population decreased a full percentage point (from 9.0 percent to 8.0 percent) between 1996 and 2011.
- Average LDL (bad) cholesterol declined over 20 percent between 1998 and 2011.
- Between 1995 and 2006, the incidence rate of End State Renal Disease (ESRD) in AI/AN individuals with diabetes fell by 27.7 percent, which translates into millions of dollars in savings for Medicare, the Indian Health Service, and other third party payers.

Action: Call your Senators and Representative, and ask them to add their name to an SDPI support letter because:

- SDPI is a life-saving program that provides real returns on federal investment.
- SDPI must be reauthorized in order to continue to make progress on the devastatingly high incidence of diabetes in Indian Country.

House of Representatives: To determine your Representative and receive specific contact information for them, [click here](#).

The House SDPI support letter is being distributed by Reps. Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Ed Whitfield (R-KY)

Senate: To determine your Senators and receive specific contact information for them, [click here](#).

The Senate SDPI support letter is being distributed by Sens. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH).

**To be connected to a Representative or Senator via phone, call the
Congressional switchboard at: 202-224-3121**

For more information, contact Liz Malerba, NIHB Legislative Assistant at Lmalerba@nihb.org or 202-507-4070

