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be much better. Please call your Representative and Senators, and ask them to add their names to these letters. To view more information on the legislative alert, including the House and Senate support letters, click [here](#).

On March 7th, NIHB hosted a Tribal briefing and Caucus in order to prepare Tribal Leaders to advocate for the continuation of SDPI. For more information on this meeting and SDPI reauthorization, please contact Liz Malerba, Legislative Assistant, at Lmalerba@nihb.org.

NIHB UPDATES

NIHB Legislative Alert: Ask Congress to Sign On to a Support Letter for SDPI—Deadline Extended

Established in 1997 for the prevention and treatment of diabetes in American Indian and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs), the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) is expiring at the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. As Congress begins to consider reauthorizing this life-saving program, broad-based support from Representatives and Senators is crucial. Members in each chamber are circulating bipartisan support letters for SDPI and its sister program, the Special Diabetes Program, which provides research dollars for type-1 diabetes. The deadline to sign on to the support has been extended from the end of March to **Friday, April 20, 2012**.

To ensure uninterrupted funding for both programs, Congress must pass reauthorization legislation this year. Currently, the letters have 44 signers in the Senate and 195 signers in the House. These numbers are great, but they could

Call for Proposals for NIHB Public Health Summit Deadline Today

The National Indian Health Board (NIHB) is holding its 3rd Annual National Tribal Public Health Summit May 30 – June 1, 2012 at the Hard Rock Casino in Tulsa, OK. The theme is, “Our Health, Our Way: Achieving Healthy Native Communities.” Recently, NIHB extended its **Call for Proposals deadline to April 16th**.

The NIHB invites proposals for presenters addressing Tribal public health topics such as:

- Public Health Accreditation
- Promising research
- Epidemiologic practices, Findings, or Innovations in advancing AI/ANs in Public Health
- Traditional practices
- Social marketing
- Environmental Health
- Emergency Preparedness
- Building successful partnerships
- Public Health messaging
- Behavioral Health
- Health promotion and disease prevention



- Digital Storytelling
- Public Health Law
- Community Assessments

Proposals that build evidence for and strengthen the use of regulatory, legal and policy solutions to improve Tribal Public Health are strongly encouraged. Also, proposal outside of these suggestions or cross-cutting topics will be considered.

To view more information about the Summit, including the Workshop Application, click [here](#).

ADMINISTRATION UPDATES

IHS Announces Tribal Consultation Summit

Recently, the Indian Health Service (IHS) announced that it will hold another 2012 Tribal Consultation Summit August 8-9 in Denver, CO. For more information and to register, please click [here](#).

IHS Announces FY 2012 Scholarship Program

In an April 10th Federal Register notice, the Indian Health Service (IHS) announced its Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Indian Health Professions Scholarship Program. IHS is currently recruiting qualified students for the following:

- The Indian Health Professions Preparatory Scholarship authorized by section 103 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA), 94 (1976).
- The Indian Health Professions Pre-graduate Scholarship authorized by section 103 of the IHCIA, 94 (1976).
- The Indian Health Professions Scholarship authorized by section 104 of the IHCIA, 94 (1976).

Full-time and part-time scholarships will be funded for each of the three scholarship programs. The scholarship award selections and funding are subject to availability of funds appropriated for the Scholarship Program. Approximately 25 awards will be made under the Health Professions Preparatory and Pre-graduate

Scholarship Programs for Indians. The awards are for tuition and fees only and the average award to a full-time student is approximately \$10,701.35. An estimated 280 awards will be made under the Indian Health Professions Scholarship Program. The awards are for 12 months in duration, and will cover both tuition and fees and Other Related Costs (ORC).

For more information, click [here](#).

New Health Care Law Provisions Cut Red Tape, Save up to \$4.6 Billion

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius recently announced a proposed rule that would establish a unique health plan identifier under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). The proposed rule would implement several administrative simplification provisions of the Affordable Care Act.

The proposed changes would save health care providers and health plans up to \$4.6 billion over the next ten years, according to estimates released by the HHS today. The estimates were included in a proposed rule that cuts red tape and simplifies administrative processes for doctors, hospitals and health insurance plans.

Currently, when health plans and entities like third party administrators bill providers, they are identified using a wide range of different identifiers that do not have a standard length or format. As a result, health care providers run into a number of time-consuming problems, such as misrouting of transactions, rejection of transactions due to insurance identification errors, and difficulty determining patient eligibility.

The rule simplifies the administrative process for providers by proposing that health plans have a unique identifier of a standard length and format to facilitate routine use in computer systems. This will allow provider offices to automate and simplify their processes, particularly when processing bills and other transactions.



The proposed rule also delays required compliance by one year– from Oct. 1, 2013, to Oct. 1, 2014– for new codes used to classify diseases and health problems. These codes, known as the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Edition diagnosis and procedure codes, or ICD-10, will include new procedures and diagnoses and improve the quality of information available for quality improvement and payment purposes.

Many provider groups have expressed serious concerns about their ability to meet the Oct. 1, 2013, compliance date. The proposed change in the compliance date for ICD-10 would give providers and other covered entities more time to prepare and fully test their systems to ensure a smooth and coordinated transition to these new code sets.

The proposed rule is the third in a series of administrative simplification rules in the new health care law. HHS released the first in July of 2011 and the second in January of 2012, and plans to announce more in the coming months. More information on the proposed rule is available on fact sheets at:

http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/fact_sheets.asp.

The proposed rule may be viewed at: www.ofr.gov/inspection.aspx. Comments are due 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

Job Opportunities at NIHB!

The NIHB is currently seeking qualified applicants for the following positions:

- **Regional Extension Center Coordinator**
- **Health Policy Coordinator**

For more information, including a job application, click [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

NATIONAL TRAINING FOR INDIAN COUNTRY ON THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND INDIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

DATE: APRIL 18-19

LOCATION: MYSTIC LAKE CASINO
PRIOR LAKE, MN

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE HEARING ON, “FDA USER FEES 2012: HOW INNOVATION HELPS PATIENTS AND JOBS”

DATE: APRIL 18TH

TIME: 10:15 AM

LOCATION: 2123 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS HEARING ON, “THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO BETTER TARGET BENEFITS AND ELIMINATE WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE”

DATE: APRIL 19TH

TIME: 10:00 AM

LOCATION: 1100 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS LISTENING SESSION ON, “THE FARM BILL: FOCUS ON THE FUTURE OF NATIVE PROGRAMS”


DATE: APRIL 19TH

TIME: 10:15 AM

LOCATION: 628 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510



Save the Date
May 30, 31 & June 1, 2012
National Tribal Public Health Summit
Hard Rock Cafe & Casino
TULSA, OKLAHOMA



**Our Health,
Our Way**
Achieving Healthy
Native Communities

Register Today!

You are cordially invited to attend
National Indian Health Board's
29th ANNUAL CONSUMER
CONFERENCE

Celebrating
NIHB'S 40th Anniversary

September 24- 28, 2012
DENVER, COLORADO

Sign Up for Washington Report, at:
http://www.nihb.org/legislative/washington_report.php

For More Information Contact:
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