



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

House Repeals Two ACA Provisions

NIHB Testifies at House Appropriations
Hearing

OPM Rules on FEHB for Tribal
Employees

HILL UPDATES

House Repeals Two ACA Provisions

On May 3rd and 4th, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to repeal two provisions of the Patient Protection Affordable Care Act (ACA): one establishing state health insurance exchanges and one promoting school-based health center construction.

In a largely party line vote on May 3rd, H.R. 1213, a bill that would rescind \$1.9 billion in assistance to states establishing insurance exchanges, passed the House 238-183. All Republicans and five Democrats voted in favor of the legislation, which would prevent many states from creating exchanges, but would not affect the federal government's ability to create and manage exchanges throughout the country.

Then, on May 4th, the House voted to rescind the \$50 million annual federal grants to states through 2013 for new construction and improvements to school-based health clinics.

H.R. 1214 passed by a vote of 235-191, with just three Democrats in favor and four Republicans against.

Although neither bill is expected to receive action in the Senate, the Obama Administration has threatened to veto H.R. 1213, the repeal of funding for exchanges, while just strongly condemning H.R. 1214.

NIHB continues to meet with Members of Congress in support of the preservation of ACA and is monitoring the situation closely.

NIHB UPDATES

NIHB Testifies at House Appropriations Hearing

On May 3rd and 4th, the House Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies hosted a public witness hearing on Native American Issues and the FY 2012 budget. Over the two days, the Subcommittee called dozens of panels of Tribal leaders to testify on everything from education to business enterprises.

On behalf of NIHB, Albuquerque Area Representative, Lester Secatero, testified on a panel with other such national organizations as National Congress of American Indians and Nation Council on Urban Indian Health,. With remarks that centered on the FY 2012 budget for the Indian Health Service, Mr. Secatero called for the preservation of increases in President Obama's request, the



protection of IHS from budget cuts, and a plan to full fund the agency saying, “achieving funding parity is critical to the future of Indian health and to fulfilling the United States’s trust responsibility to AI/AN people.”

For more information or to view testimony, please visit:

<http://appropriations.house.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Detail&HearingId=42&Month=5&Year=2011>

NIHB Submits Comments on Health IT Strategic Plan

The National Indian Health Board submitted comments to the Office of the National Coordinator on the draft Federal Health Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan: 2011-2015 via the Health IT Buzz Blog at <http://www.healthit.gov/buzz-blog/>.

As stated in the Strategic Plan, the overall mission for the Federal Health IT effort is “to improve health and health care for all Americans through the use of information and technology.” The Strategic Plan goes on to indicate that one of the guiding principles of the Strategic Plan is that “the government will endeavor to assure that underserved and at-risk individuals enjoy these benefits to the extent as all other citizens.” NIHB provided many recommended modifications to the strategic plan to ensure that this guiding principle is applied to American Indian and Alaska Native communities and the providers that predominantly serve them, and that American Indians and Alaska Natives are fully and effectively incorporated into this mission.

For more information please contact Doneg McDonough at Dmcdonough@nihb.org or visit:

http://www.nihb.org/tribal_resources/tribal_resources.php where the NIHB comment letter can be found.

ADMINISTRATION UPDATES

OPM Rules on FEHB for Tribal Employees

On May 2nd, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) sent a letter to Tribal leaders providing an update on the implementation of Section 409 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, which allows Tribes to purchase health insurance for their employees through the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program

In the letter, OPM told leaders that all Tribal employees would be eligible for FEHB coverage, should the Tribe choose to purchase it. Additionally, OPM is working to establish a schedule for regional consultation with Tribes as implementation of this provision continues.

In addition, OPM has created a website to provide updates and information on the implementation of this provision. It can be found at:

www.opm.gov/TribalProgram

To read the letter from OPM, please visit:

<http://www.ihs.gov/PublicAffairs/DirCorner/docs/OPM%20Tribal%20Leader%20Letter.pdf>

IHS Director Rules on Structure of SDPI Extension

In a May 2nd “Dear Tribal Leader” letter, Indian Health Service Director, Dr. Yvette Roubideaux notified Tribes of a decision regarding the funding structure for the recent 2-year extension of the Special Diabetes Program for Indians. After consultation with Tribes and the Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee (TLDC), she has decided to implement two TLDC recommendations for the program. The first is that the funding distribution for the program will remain the same throughout the 2-year extension (2011-2013). The second is that a continuation process and not a competitive process be used



to transition programs from previous funding to the new funding under the extension.

To view the letter, please visit:

http://www.ihs.gov/PublicAffairs/DirCorner/2011_Letters/05-02-2011%20Letter.pdf

IHS Director Issues Update Letter on IHCIA Implementation

In a May 5th “Dear Tribal Leader” letter, Indian Health Service Director, Dr. Yvette Roubideaux provided an update on provisions with March 23, 2011 deadline for implementation. Many of these provisions required reports or plans to be completed by one year after enactment. Also, the Director describes Section 703 Memoranda of Agreement with the Department of the Interior (DOI) and Sec. 714 Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment which are out for Tribal consultation. Tribal input regarding these two provisions is due May 30, 2011.

To view the letter, please visit:

http://www.ihs.gov/PublicAffairs/DirCorner/2011_Letters/05-02-2011%20Letter.pdf



Sign Up for Washington Report, at:

http://www.nihb.org/legislative/washington_report.php

For More Information Contact:

Jennifer Cooper, JD, Legislative Director
jcooper@nihb.org or

Liz Malerba, Legislative Assistant
lmalerba@nihb.org

THIS WEEK ON THE HILL

**HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH HEARING
ON, “REFORMING MEDICARE PHYSICIAN
PAYMENTS”**

MAY 12, 2011

1100 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE
BUILDING

2:00 PM

WASHINGTON, DC

