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IHS Director Calls for Legislative Fix to Definition of Indian

As implementation of the Affordable Care Act moves forward, the inclusion of multiple definitions of “Indian” in the law remains a problematic issue for Tribes. Indeed, contained in the law are three different statutory definitions of American Indians and Alaska Natives. In an August 26<sup>th</sup> blog post, Indian Health Service Director Yvette Roubideaux responds to Tribal concerns by calling for a “legislative fix” to the law, an amendment to the Affordable Care Act drafted and passed by Congress. To view the blog post, please visit:  
<http://www.ihs.gov/PublicAffairs/DirCorner/index.cfm?module=blog>

HHS, Treasury Release Proposed Rules on Medicaid Expansion and Premium Tax Credits Under Exchanges

The Department of Health and Human Services and Treasury released three new proposed rules concerning State Insurance Exchanges, one-stop marketplaces where consumers can choose an affordable private health insurance plan suited to their needs.

The three proposed rules released by HHS and Treasury focus on the following:

- **Health Insurance Premium Tax Credit:** Individuals and families will receive premium tax credits to help defray insurance costs, increasing access to health coverage for millions of middle class American families.
- **Medicaid Eligibility:** Coordinating the Exchange with Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program eligibility will make enrollment seamless for qualified Americans and reduce the administrative burden on states.
- **Easy, Simple Access to Coverage for Consumers and Small Businesses:** New rules will make it easy for consumers to enroll in high-quality health plans and get help paying for health coverage through premium tax credits and cost sharing reductions. Small employers participating in the Small Business Health Options Program will be able to offer their employees a choice of health plans and cut their costs with new tax credits.



In the weeks ahead, the Administration will conduct an aggressive outreach campaign and ask for public comment on the three proposed rules from employers, consumers, state leaders, health care providers and insurers, and the American people. In addition to accepting written public comments for the next 75 days, the departments will hold forums. These forums will help ensure more Americans have the opportunity to share their views regarding the establishment of Affordable Insurance Exchanges. Invitation-only forums will be held in:

- Atlanta, GA: September 13<sup>th</sup>
- New York, NY: September 21<sup>st</sup>
- Sacramento, CA: September 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Chicago, IL: September 26<sup>th</sup>

For more information about the proposed rules, visit:

- Overview: [www.HealthCare.gov/news/factsheets/exchanges08122011a.html](http://www.HealthCare.gov/news/factsheets/exchanges08122011a.html);
- Easy, Simple Access to Coverage for Consumers and Small Businesses: [www.HealthCare.gov/news/factsheets/exchanges08122011b.html](http://www.HealthCare.gov/news/factsheets/exchanges08122011b.html)
- Health Insurance Premium Tax Credit: [www.treasury.gov/press-center/Documents/36BFactSheet.PDF](http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/Documents/36BFactSheet.PDF)
- Medicaid Eligibility: [www.HealthCare.gov/news/factsheets/exchanges08122011c.html](http://www.HealthCare.gov/news/factsheets/exchanges08122011c.html)

### **HHS Tribal Consultation on Exchanges Proposed Rulemaking Continues**

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) invites Tribes to participate in an upcoming Tribal consultation on the Affordable Insurance Exchanges Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) as well as other provisions in the Affordable Care Act. HHS is working hard to implement policies that will improve the quality and

accessibility of health services for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people. The consultation sessions will provide a general overview of the Affordable Care Act and the specific provision mentioned above, including an educational session on each topic, followed by a consultation for that topic. Consultation sessions will be held in three cities so that you may select the most convenient consultation to attend. The remaining dates and locations are listed below:

#### **SEPTEMBER 7, 2011**

**Denver, Colorado**

**9:00 AM – 5:30 PM**

Embassy Suites: Downtown 1420 Stout St.  
Denver, CO 80202

#### **SEPTEMBER 15-16, 2011**

**Washington, DC**

HHH Building: Great Hall  
200 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

HHS will provide agendas for these consultations, as well as a letter from Secretary Kathleen Sebelius in the near future.

### **NIHB UPDATES**

#### **NIHB Announces 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Consumer Conference**

The National Indian Health Board (NIHB) invites tribal leaders, health administrators, policy makers, and area health boards to the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Consumer Conference (ACC) in Anchorage, Alaska at the Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center from September 26 to 29, 2011. The theme for this year's conference, *Health, Hope, and Heroes: Using the Foundations of Tribal Values and Knowledge to Advance Native*



*Health!*, will provide a chance for attendees to discuss successes, challenges, opportunities, and the future of health care for American Indian and Alaska Native people.

Meetings before and after the ACC will include tribal consultations conducted by federal agencies such as the Health Resources and Services Administration. The conference will also include a health information technology and electronic medical record marketplace, and culture night. NIHB plans to offer plenary and workshop sessions on topics including Medicare/Medicaid and tribal health, youth health, health care reform implementation, behavioral health, health information technology and electronic medical records, and public health issues.

### [VIEW THE LATEST 2011 ACC AGENDA](#)

You can register and learn more about the conference details [here](#). If you register before September 9, 2011 for the discounted rate of \$400, after September 9, 2011, registration will be \$475.

For more details, visit the [ACC's website](#) or contact NIHB Deputy Director, [Evangelyn "Angel" Dotomain](#)



### [NEXT WEEK IN WASHINGTON](#)

#### **CONGRESS IS OUT OF SESSION**

#### **WHITE HOUSE BUDGET CALL**

WHEN: TUESDAY, AUGUST 30TH

START TIME 2:30 PM EST

DIAL IN: (800) 553-5275

PASSCODE TITLE: WHITE HOUSE BRIEFING CALL

PLEASE JOIN OMB EXECUTIVE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR ROBERT GORDON FOR A CONFERENCE CALL ON THE FEDERAL BUDGET. THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

#### **Sign Up for [Washington Report](#), at:**

[http://www.nihb.org/legislative/washington\\_report.php](http://www.nihb.org/legislative/washington_report.php)

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