

National Indian Health Board



National Indian Health Board Resolution 11 – 06

Support for a Congressional Indian Health Caucus

WHEREAS, the National Indian Health Board (NIHB), established in 1972, serves all Federally recognized American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribal governments by advocating for the improvement of health care delivery to AI/ANs, as well as upholding the Federal government's trust responsibility to AI/AN Tribal governments;

WHEREAS, through the cession of lands and execution of treaties, the federal government took on a trust responsibility to provide for the health and welfare of Indian peoples;

WHEREAS, all branches of the United States government have this unique and special responsibility to Tribes to provide health care to AI/ANs as recognized through the Constitution, Treaties with Indian Tribes, Supreme Court decisions and federal legislation;

WHEREAS, the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, is the principal federal health care agency that administers health care to 2 million AI/ANs residing in Tribal communities in 35 states, directly, or through contracts or compacts with Tribes and Tribal organizations under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA);

WHEREAS, basic health services available to meet the needs of AI/AN people vary from geographic Area to Area and for health care not available at IHS or Tribal facilities, the IHS and Tribes purchase health care from the private or public sector under the contract health services (CHS) program;

WHEREAS, despite the Federal government's trust responsibility to provide health care to AI/ANs, Indian people suffer disproportionately higher health disparities and mortality rates compared to the general population;

WHEREAS, in addition to health disparities, the Indian health system also faces significant funding disparities, both in per capita spending between IHS and other federal health care programs and within IHS, as reflected by differences in the Level of Need Funded (LNF) across IHS sites; and



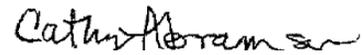
WHEREAS, strong leadership is needed in Congress to ensure that Congress honors its trust responsibility to provide the resources necessary to create and maintain an effective health care system for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the National Indian Health Board requests that the House of Representatives establishes a Congressional Indian Health Caucus to uphold the federal trust responsibility, commit to improving the health of Indian people, and address the funding disparities for Indian health care; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of National Indian Health Board until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Board, with quorum present, on the 25th day of September 2011.



Chairperson, Cathy Abramson

ATTEST:



Secretary, H. Sally Smith