

National Indian Health Board



January 5, 2022

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave S.W.
Washington D.C. 20201

Sent via email: xavier.becerra@hhs.gov; Cynthia.Palafox@hhs.gov

Re: Meeting with the HHS Secretary

Dear Secretary Becerra,

On behalf of the National Indian Health Board (NIHB) and the 574 Federally Recognized Tribes we serve, we request a meeting to discuss top line American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) health issues. This meeting will provide an opportunity to improve collaboration so we can ensure Tribal leaders' concerns are heard and understood. Together, we can ensure tangible progress for AI/AN health under the Biden Administration.

NIHB is an inter-Tribal organization that serves as a unified national voice on AI/AN health. Our governing body is Tribally-elected and consists of representatives from each of the twelve Indian Health Service regions. Each year, NIHB gathers input from Tribal leaders and area health boards from across the country to develop our [Legislative and Policy Agenda for Indian Health](#) that represents the needs and priorities for Indian Country. As technical advisors, NIHB has worked with Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee and the numerous other HHS Tribal Advisory Committees to help provide HHS and its Agencies and Offices recommendations and guidance on the health priorities of Indian Country. We recognize that Congress and the Administration have acted on many pressing Tribal health priorities NIHB identified. However, through direct and transparent discussions with the Secretary, NIHB can help share information, propose clarifications, and work collaboratively to develop Tribally-focused solutions that will improve the health outcomes of AI/AN people.



Please let us know when in January or February 2022 will work best for your schedule. Thank you in advance for your consideration, we look forward to further collaboration on Tribal health issues.

Yours in Health,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and "S".

William Smith, *Valdez Native Tribe*
Chairman
National Indian Health Board

CC: Stacy A. Bohlen, CEO, NIHB
NIHB Board of Directors
Cynthia Palafox, HHS