

PRESS RELEASE: At NCUIH Washington Summit, Leaders from Indian Country Address Impacts of Government Shutdown and Outline Vision for Urban Indians

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On the first day, the National Council of Urban Indian Health Washington Summit featured key insights about the government shutdown and the future of urban Indian health.

Washington, DC (April 24, 2019) — The National Council of Urban Indian Health had a successful first day with keynotes from Rear Admiral Michael Weahkee, Principal Deputy Director of the Indian Health Service (IHS), Jacqueline Pata, Executive Director at the National Council of American Indians (NCAI), Professor Matthew Fletcher, Director of the Indigenous Law & Policy Center at the Michigan State University. The over 100 individuals in attendance included representatives from over 20 Urban Indian Health Programs (UIHPs).

In keeping with the Summit's theme of *One Voice Acting Strategically to improve our Health through Policy and Partnerships*, **Rear Admiral Michael Weahkee** stressed the importance of interagency collaboration with Urban Indian Health Programs (UIHPs).

"During the shutdown we heard about clinics closing. Indian Country has come together to say we can't afford another shutdown," said **Jacqueline Pata**, Executive Director at the National Council of American Indians (NCAI).

"Indian health is part of a trust obligation that goes back to the earliest treaties of American Indians with the United States Government. There is no argument to justify that urban Indian populations should receive any different level of health care from US Government as part of that trust obligation," said Professor **Matthew Fletcher**, Director of the Indigenous Law & Policy Center at the Michigan State University.

Day two of the Summit includes a keynote from **Dr. Rose Weahkee**, Acting Director of Office of Urban Indian Health Programs at the Indian Health Service and a panel of Native American Staffers

from Capitol Hill including **Naomi Miguel** from the House Committee on Natural Resources, **Jacqueline Bisille** from the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, and **Heidi Todacheene** from the Office of Congresswoman Deb Haaland.

View the agenda for April 24 [here](#).

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About the National Council of Urban Indian Health (<https://ncuih.org>)

The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is the premier National 501(c)(3) organization devoted to the support and development of quality, accessible, and culturally-competent health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) living in urban settings. NCUIH envisions a nation where comprehensive, culturally competent personal and public health services are available and accessible to AI/ANs living in urban communities throughout the United States. NCUIH represents 42 Urban Indian Health Programs (UIHPs) in the United States.