

PRESS RELEASE: Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act Passes out of the House Subcommittee on Indigenous Peoples

Category: Press Release

written by Meredith Raimondi | March 12, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Meredith Raimondi, 202-417-7781, mraimondi@ncuih.org

Washington, DC (March 11, 2020) - Today, [H.R. 4153 - Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act](#) was considered and ordered to be reported by the House Natural Resources Committee during a legislative markup. H.R. 4153, introduced by Representative Ro Khanna, has bipartisan support with 27 cosponsors including 16 Democrats and 11 Republicans.

“Right now, urban Indian Veterans are being left behind by the United States. This bill will allow Urban Indian Organizations to continue to provide life-saving health care to American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans, no matter where they live. We are grateful for the House Natural Resources Committee, including Chairman Grijalva and Representative Khanna for their continued efforts to push this legislation across the finish line,” said Francys Crevier, Executive Director.

“Native Americans serve in the military at a higher rate than any other population, and over 70 percent of Native Americans live in urban areas. Urban Indian organizations, like the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley, fill a crucial gap in the health care system for Native Americans that do not have access to more remote facilities run by the Indian Health Service. To honor their service to the United States, we must ensure that Native Veterans have access to the care that best fits their cultural and health needs,” said [Rep. Ro Khanna](#).

In July of 2019, the National Congress of American Indians passed a [resolution](#) calling on Congress to “enact legislation ensuring the provision of health care to American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans living in urban centers.” The NCAI resolution states: “The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) urges Congress to pass legislation that amends the Indian Health Care Improvement Act at 25 U.S.C. §1645(c) to insert UIOs after IHS and Tribal Organizations and require VA to reimburse for services provided to AI/AN Veterans at all of the IHS, Tribal, and urban (I/T/U) system, in order to protect the health and welfare of AI/AN Veterans living in urban centers, thereby honoring their sacrifices.”

This important urban Indian health bill has widespread endorsements by NCUIH’s valued partners across Indian Country along with valuable Veteran organizations, such as NCAI, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of American, and VoteVets.

Senate

The Senate companion, S. 2365, is led by Senators Udall, Moran, Tester, Rounds, and Smith.

Next Steps

NCUIH will continue to monitor the bill as it moves forward and continue to advocate for health care access for urban Indian Veterans.

Background

- [NCUIH Testifies before Congress on “Native Veterans’ Access to Healthcare”](#)
- [House Subcommittee Reviews the Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act](#)
- [NCUIH Press Release on SCIP Legislative Hearing](#)
- [Udall, Khanna Press Release](#)
- [NCUIH Press Release on Introduction](#)
- [AP Story: Bill would expand health care options for Native veterans](#)
- [House bill](#) (H.R. 4153) and [Senate bill](#) (S. 2365)

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