

PRESS RELEASE: NCAI PASSES RESOLUTION URGING CONGRESS TO REMOVE FEDERAL FACILITIES FUNDING BARRIERS FOR URBAN INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS

Category: Press Release

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The fix called for in the resolution will better ensure that UIOs can meet the changing health care delivery needs for tribal citizens residing in urban areas.

Washington, D.C. (June 28, 2021) – After extensive advocacy from NCUIH and our partners for Urban Indian health, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) passed resolution *AK-21-020: Call for Congress to Amend Section 509 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to Remove Facility Funding Barriers for Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs)* on June 24, 2021, during NCAI’s Mid-Year Conference. The resolution urges Congress to enact legislation to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) to remove the language restricting UIO facilities’ funding availability only to minor renovations to meet or maintain accreditation standards.

“Facility-related use of federal funds remains the most requested priority for our UIOs,” said NCUIH CEO Francys Crevier (Algonquin). “The current limitations found in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act force UIOs to use their limited third-party reimbursement funds for necessary minor facility improvements to meet or maintain accreditation by Joint Commission for Accreditation of Health Care Organizations. NCUIH leadership advocated for the adoption of this important resolution, and we applaud NCAI for passing it.”

NCAI resolutions are one of the policy mechanisms used to express the organizational positions on tribal, federal, state, and/or local legislation, litigation, and policy matters that affect tribal governments or communities. NCAI members establish the organization’s positions on issues that affect tribal nations and Native people through a resolution process. Resolutions to be considered at the Mid-Year Convention are only accepted if they are determined to be emergency in nature and national in scope. The resolution, submitted by NCUIH Director of Federal Relations, Sunny Stevenson (Walker River Paiute), calls on Congress to continue to honor the obligations made to tribal members by the federal government.

NCAI has been a longtime partner of NCUIH, having collaborated on previous resolutions adopted in favor of Urban Indian health, including the [extension of the Federal Tort Claims Act \(FTCA\) to be inclusive of UIOs](#), [temporary 100% FMAP for UIOs under the American Rescue Plan Act](#), and [federal reimbursement for AI/AN Veterans served at UIO facilities](#). Each of these NCAI resolutions has been instrumental in compelling Congressional action to pass these critical means of addressing contemporary issues that urban AI/AN persons encounter in seeking care under the federal trust responsibility. NCAI’s resolution follows the introduction of the Urban Indian Health Providers Facilities Improvement Act under identical House and Senate bills ([H.R. 3496](#) / [S. 1797](#)). The bipartisan, bicameral bills will pave the way for increased investment in the renovation and construction of UIO facilities. The passage of the Urban Indian Health Providers Facilities Act would

amend Section 509 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. § 1659), the provision of IHCA that pertains to UIO facility funding. The amendment will not otherwise affect federal facilities funding for IHS or tribally-operated programs through existing Indian Health Service appropriations for improvements and renovations.

RESOURCES

- [PRESS RELEASE: NCUIH BILL INTRODUCED TO EXPAND USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES FOR URBAN INDIAN HEALTH CARE](#)
- [NCUIH FY22 IHS URBAN INDIAN HEALTH BUDGET ANALYSIS INCLUDING UIO FACILITIES](#)

[Full Resolution Text](#)

[List of NCAI Mid-Year Resolutions](#)