

# **NCUIH Joins Indian Country Coalition in Urging Office of Personnel Management to Protect Federal Employees Serving Indian Country from Workforce Reductions**

Category: Policy Blog

written by Alex Sampson | March 11, 2025

On February 14, 2025, the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) joined a [coalition](#) of Tribes, Tribal Organizations and other national Native organizations in sending a letter to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Acting Director, Charles Ezell, requesting OPM take action to protect Federal employees who serve Indian Country from the planned reductions in force (RIF) as outlined in [Executive Order 14210](#).

Specifically, the Letter asks Acting Director Ezell to exempt from any workforce reductions all employees of the Indian Health Service (IHS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), and all Tribal offices throughout all Federal agencies, as well as other Federal employees whose role is to deliver services or funding to Tribal Nations or their citizens or communities. The Letter states that exercising RIF exemption authority with respect to these employees is necessary to fulfill the trust and treaty obligations owed to American Indian and Alaska Native people by the United States and to protect the unique political relationship with Tribal Nations and their citizens and communities. Exercising this authority also aligns with past and present federal practices and is necessary to avoid creating unintended life-or-death.

Following this advocacy, a February 17 [report](#) confirmed that U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kennedy rescinded the layoffs of 950 IHS employees. For NCUIH's blog on the rescinded layoffs, click [here](#).

## **About the Tribal Coalition**

NCUIH has joined a coalition with over 20 Tribal organizations to ensure administrative actions account for the government-to-government relationship between Tribes and the United States and the trust and treaty responsibility to Tribal nations and citizens.

The coalition has been active in creating joint messages to share with policy makers, sending letters to key administration officials, and developing advocacy strategies. Access the Tribal Coalition's [online resource hub](#), where you can find our letters and other advocacy tools.