

NCUIH 2025 Policy Priorities Released

Category: Policy Blog

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The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is pleased to announce the release of its 2025 Policy Priorities document, which outlines a summary of urban Indian organization (UIO) priorities for the Executive and Legislative branches of the government for 2025. These priorities were informed by [NCUIH's 2024 Policy Assessment](#).

NCUIH hosted five focus groups to identify UIO policy priorities for 2025, as they relate to Indian Health Service (IHS)- designated facility types (full ambulatory, limited ambulatory, outreach and referral, and outpatient and residential). NCUIH worked with UIOs to identify policy priorities in 2025 under eight themes:

- *Funding for Native Health Initiatives*
- *Elevating Native Voices and Fostering Dialogue*
- *Strengthening Health Outcomes: Addressing Social Determinants of Health*
- *Honoring Promises to Native Veterans*
- *Revitalizing Native Health: Embracing Traditional Healing and Behavioral Wellness*
- *“Not One More”: Healing Generational Trauma and Protecting Native Lives*
- *Addressing Workforce Recruitment and Retention Challenges*

- *Improving the Indian Health Service*

2025 Policy Priorities:

FUNDING FOR NATIVE HEALTH INITIATIVES

Increasing Funding for Indian Health Service (IHS) and Urban Indian Health

- Appropriate the Maximum Amount Possible for IHS and Fund Urban Indian Health at \$100 million.
- Support Participation and Continued Inclusion of Urban Indian Organizations in the IHS Budget Formulation Process.

Protecting Funding for Native Health from Political Disagreements

- Maintain Advance Appropriations for IHS to Insulate the Indian Health System from Government Shutdowns
- and to Protect Patient Lives.
- Transition IHS from Discretionary to Mandatory Appropriations.
- Transition Contract Support Costs and 105 (l) Leases to Mandatory Appropriations.

Meeting the Trust Obligation for IHS-Medicaid Beneficiaries Receiving at Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs)

- Pass the *Urban Indian Health Parity Act* to Ensure Permanent Full (100%) Federal Medical Assistance
- Percentage (FMAP) for Services Provided at UIOs (100% FMAP for UIOs).
- Ensure that All American Indian and Alaska Native People are Exempt from Medicaid Work Requirements.
- Allow for Audio-Only Telehealth Services for Medicare Beneficiaries at UIOs through the *Telehealth for Tribal Communities Act*.

Transforming Health Care Resources in Indian Country and Beyond

- Decrease Competition and Reduce Barriers to Access to Ensure Equitable Distribution of Grant Funding.

ELEVATING NATIVE VOICES AND FOSTERING DIALOUGE

Inclusion of Urban Native Communities in Resource Allocation

- Ensure Critical Resource and Funding Opportunities are Inclusive of Urban Native Communities and the Urban Indian Organizations that Help Serve Them.

STRENGTHENING HEALTH OUTCOMES: ADDRESSING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Improving Native Maternal and Infant Health

- Strengthen the Ability of the Advisory Committee on Infant and Maternal Mortality to Address Native Maternal and Infant Health.
- Improve Funding Access for Urban Indian Organizations to expand Housing Services.

Improving Food Security for Urban American Indian and Alaska Native People

- Increase Access to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Resources and Funding Opportunities for Urban American Indian and Alaska Native Communities and the Urban Indian Organizations that Serve Them.
- Increase Urban Indian Organization Access to Fresh and Traditional Foods Through Increased Funding for the IHS Produce Prescription Pilot Program.
- Permanently Reauthorize and Increase Funding for the Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) at a Minimum of \$250 Million Annually

Including Urban American Indian and Alaska Native People in Preparing and Protecting Their Communities

- Increase Emergency Preparedness through the Passage of the *CDC Tribal Public Health Security and Preparedness Act*.

HONORING THE PROMISES TO NATIVE VETERANS

Improving American Indian and Alaska Native Veteran Health Outcomes

- Engage with Urban Indian Organizations to Successfully Implement the Interagency Initiative to Address Homelessness for Urban American Indians and Alaska Native Veterans.

REVITALIZING NATIVE HEALTH: EMBRACING TRADITIONAL HEALING AND BEHAVIORAL WELLNESS

Improving Behavioral Health for All American Indian and Alaska Native People

- Increase Funding for Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder Resources for American Indian and Alaska Native People.
- Respond to the Significant Increase in Overdose Deaths in Indian Country.
- Pass the *Comprehensive Addiction Resources Emergency (CARE) Act*.

Improving Health Outcomes Through Traditional Healing and Culturally Based Practices

- Improve Funding Access for Urban Indian Organizations to Expand Traditional Healing and Culturally Based Practices.

“NOT ONE MORE”: HEALING GENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND PROTECTING NATIVE LIVES

Healing from Federal Boarding Schools

- Support Federal Initiatives to Allow the Indian Health Service to Support Healing from Boarding School Policies.

Ending the Epidemic of Missing or Murdered Indigenous Peoples (MMIP)

- Pass the Bridging Agency Data Gaps and Ensuring Safety (BADGES) for Native Communities Act.
- Honor Executive Order 14053: Improving Public Safety and Criminal Justice for Native Americans and
- Addressing the Crisis of Missing or Murdered Indigenous People by Including Urban Indian Organizations in Prevention and Intervention Efforts.

ADDRESSING WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION CHALLENGES

Improving the Indian Health Workforce

- Include Urban Indian Organizations in the national Community Health Aide Program (CHAP).
- Improve the Indian Health Workforce through the Placement of Residents at Urban Indian Organizations through the Department of Veterans Affairs Pilot Program on Graduate Medical Education and Residency Program (PPGMER).
- Enable Urban Indian Organizations to Fill Critical Workforce Needs through University Partnerships by Passing the Medical Student Education Authorization Act.
- Extend Federal Health Benefits to Urban Indian Organizations.
- Improve Recruitment and Retention of Physicians at Urban Indian Organizations by Reintroducing the IHS Workforce Parity Act.
- Increase Tax Fairness for Loan Repayment for Urban Indian Organization Staff by Reintroducing the Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act.
- Permit U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Officers to be Detailed to Urban Indian Organizations.
- Improve Community Health Worker Coverage at Urban Indian Organizations through the Introduction of the Community Health Workers Access Act.

Accurately Account for Provider Shortages

- Engage with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) so that Urban Indian Organizations receive Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) Scores that Accurately Reflect the Level of Provider Shortage for Urban Indian Organization Service Areas.

IMPROVING THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Patient Care by Advancing Health Information Technology

- Improve Health Information Technology, Including Electronic Health Records Systems.

Elevate the Health Care Needs of American Indian and Alaska Native People Within the Federal Government

- Pass the Stronger Engagement for Indian Health Needs Act to elevate the IHS Director to Assistant Secretary for Indian Health.