

[Trump Submits Nomination of Mark Cruz for Director of the Indian Health Service](#)

Category: Policy Blog

written by Jeremy Grabiner | June 3, 2026

On June 1, 2026, President Trump [submitted](#) the appointment of Mark Cruz, a citizen of the Klamath Tribes, as the Director of the Indian Health Service (IHS). Cruz currently serves as [Senior Advisor to Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr.](#), as one of the highest-ranking Native officials within HHS. Cruz holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Pepperdine University and a Master of Arts in Urban Education Policy from Brown University.

The position of IHS Director has been vacant since the resignation of former Director Roselyn Tso. On December 2, 2025, IHS Chief of Staff Clayton Fulton [assumed](#) the acting director role during the leadership transition. As the IHS Director, Cruz will be responsible for administering a nationwide program that is responsible for providing comprehensive health care services to American Indians and Alaska Natives through the Indian Health Service, Tribes, Tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations.

The National Council of Urban Indian Health has previously stressed the importance of appointing a permanent IHS Director and [called](#) for the elevation of the role to Assistant Secretary.

Next Steps

The nomination will now be referred to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, which will schedule a confirmation hearing before a full Senate floor vote.

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NCUIH Contact: Meredith Raimondi, Vice President of Policy and Communications, mraimondi@ncuih.org