The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth H.O.B  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn H.O.B  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
317 Russell Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

\[\text{Re: Indian Health Care Funding and Advance Appropriations}\]

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the undersigned Tribal nations, Tribal Organizations, and friends of Indian health, we write to respectfully request that you support and include Advance Appropriations and no less than the House-passed level of $8.121 billion for the Indian Health Service (IHS) in the final Appropriations bill for FY 2023.

We call upon Congress to honor the United States’ trust and treaty obligations to Tribal nations by securing these requests to improve the health care status of American Indians and Alaska Native people.\(^1\) Tribal nations exchanged millions of acres of land for the agreements and promises in the treaties between our nations, including the obligation for the provision of comprehensive health care from the United States.

Accordingly, these federal responsibilities are carried out, in part, by the IHS, within the Department of Health and Human Services. This agency provides both direct care and resources

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\(^1\) Congress declared the fulfillment of the trust responsibility and treaty obligations to achieve the highest health care levels for American Indians and Alaska Natives and to provide the requisite resources to be the policy of this Nation in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. 25 U.S.C. §1602.
for the delivery of health care services to American Indian and Alaska Native people. The IHS and the Indian health care delivery system are unique in this regard.

American Indian and Alaska Native people often face the most significant health disparities among all populations in the United States. The rates of diabetes, suicides, behavioral health challenges, COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations, and deaths are higher than most other populations. Yet, the Indian health system is underfunded by nearly 50% of appropriate levels.

Strategic investments from the COVID-19 relief funding packages such as the American Rescue Plan Act, have been welcomed. However, the underlying conditions which contributed to the tragic COVID-19 outcomes remain unaddressed. These conditions include, for example, the lack of adequate health care facilities, specialty care facilities, available workforce, and consistent and recurring funding for prevention and treatment services.

This chronic underfunding significantly limits the availability and accessibility of health care services for our communities. It also leaves the Indian health system particularly vulnerable to the instability of the federal funding process when Continuing Resolutions or government shutdowns occur.

Each day without full funding, with only temporary or no funding from the Continuing Resolutions or government shutdowns, is a step backward for Indian health care systems. Health care service delivery, administrative functions, and other operations are significantly impeded, delayed, or disrupted during periods of Continuing Resolutions or government shutdowns to the detriment of the American Indian and Alaska Native patients.

Congress can change that. The United States and Tribal nations share a government-to-government relationship and a mutual resolve to improve the health of our communities. Securing the House-passed levels of funding and Advance Appropriations will provide the initial step forward to funding stability for the Indian health care system.

We urge Congress to take this necessary step and stand ready to work with you in improving the lives of American Indian and Alaska Native people. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

**Tribal Nations**

Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma  
Caddo Nation  
Chickasaw Nation  
Citizen Potawatomi Nation  
Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians of California

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2 Although the federal trust responsibility and treaty obligation extends throughout the federal government, the IHS is the primary agency which carries out these responsibilities. The IHS provides health care services either directly to American Indian and Alaska Native people, or through contracts or compacts with Tribal nations which, in turn, provide the services. The IHS may also enter contracts with urban Indian organizations to provide health care services to American Indian and Alaska Native people in certain urban locations.
Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
Cowlitz Tribe
Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Jamul Indian Village of California
Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
La Posta Band of Mission Indians
Lummi Indian Business Council
Manchester Point Arena Band of Pomo Indians
Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake Tribe)
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
Nez Perce Tribe
Oneida Nation
Pechanga Band of Indians
Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Poarch Creek Indians
Pueblo of Tesuque
Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe
Rappahannock Tribe
Resighini Rancheria
Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
San Carlos Apache Tribe
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Skokomish Tribe
Sokaogon Chippewa Community
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe
Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
Tohono O'odham Nation
Tsalagiyi Nvdagi Tribe
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana
Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe
Walker River Paiute Tribe
Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)
Ysleta del Sur Pueblo

Organizations
ACA Consumer Advocacy
AI/AN Health Partners
Alaska Native Health Board
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
Albuquerque Area Indian Health Board, Inc.
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Indian Health & Services
American Indian Health Commission for Washington State
American Indian Health Service of Chicago
Association on American Indian Affairs
Bakersfield American Indian Health Project, Inc.
Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation
California Consortium for Urban Indian Health
California Rural Indian Health Board
Canoncito Band of Navajos Health Center
Caring Ambassadors Program
Choctaw Health Center
Coalition of Large Tribes
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative
Consolidated Tribal Health Project, Inc.
Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc.
Copper River Native Association
Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments
Every Texan
Fallon Tribal Health Center
Families USA
Family Voices
First Focus on Children
Fresno American Indian Health Project
Great Lakes Area Tribal Health Board
Great Plains Tribal Leaders’ Health Board
Health Care Voices
Hepatitis C Mentor & Support Group, Inc.
Hunter Health
Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa
Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley
Indigenous Pact
Inter Tribal Association of Arizona
International Association for Indigenous Aging
International Association of Forensic Nurses
Justice in Aging
Kansas City Indian Center
Kids Forward
Maniilaq Association
Metro New York Health Care for All
Michigan League for Public Policy
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Council of Urban Indian Health
National Indian Health Board
National Indigenous Women's Resource Center
National League for Nursing
National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition
National Partnership for Women & Families
Native American Connections
Native American LifeLines, Inc.
Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest, Inc.
Native Americans for Community Action, Inc.
NATIVE Project - Urban Indian Health Program - Spokane, WA
Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
Nisqually Tribal Health & Wellness Center
Northwest Harvest
Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
Oklahoma City Indian Clinic
Oklahoma Policy Institute
Partners In Health
R2H Action [Right to Health]
Riverside-San Bernardino County Indian Health, Inc.
Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
Sault Tribe Health Division
Seattle Indian Health Board
Self-Governance Communication & Education Tribal Consortium
SF Hep B Free - Bay Area
South Dakota Urban Indian Health
Southcentral Foundation
Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium
Southern Indian Health Council, Inc.
Southern Plains Tribal Health Board
Texas Native Health
Treatment Action Group
Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation
United American Indian Involvement, Inc.
United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund
Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut
University of California San Francisco School of Medicine HEAL Initiative
Urban Inter-Tribal Center of Texas - Urban Indian Health Program - Dallas, TX
USAGing
Wiconi Wakan Health and Healing Center
Work for Consolidated Tribal Health Project

**Friends of Indian Health**

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Cc: The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
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    The Honorable Chellie Pingree
    The Honorable David Joyce
    The Honorable Raul Grijalva
    The Honorable Bruce Westerman
    The Honorable Teresa Leger Fernández
    The Honorable Jay Obernolte
    The Honorable Sharice Davids
    The Honorable Tom Cole
    The Honorable Patrick Leahy
    The Honorable Richard Shelby
    The Honorable Jeff Merkley
    The Honorable Brian Schatz
    The Honorable Lisa Murkowski