



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians
Resolution #ABQ-19-063

TITLE: In Support of Increased Direct Funding to Tribal Nations for Public Health

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WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, the National Indian Health Board (NIHB), established in 1972, serves all federally recognized AI/AN tribal governments by advocating for the improvement of health care delivery to AI/ANs, as well as upholding the federal government's trust responsibility to AI/AN tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has a unique and enduring trust responsibility established through treaties and reaffirmed by the U.S. Constitution, Supreme Court case law, and federal legislation and regulations, to ensure provisions of quality and comprehensive health services to tribal nations and AI/AN peoples; and

WHEREAS, tribal nations and the United States share a government-to-government relationship that necessitates frequent and timely consultation on any federal policy and programmatic proposals that may impact tribal communities and AI/AN peoples; and

WHEREAS, AI/AN tribal nations have largely been left out of the development of U.S. public health infrastructure during the last century, contributing to significant discrepancies in public health infrastructure, capacity and availability of services in tribal communities; and

WHEREAS, many tribal nations lack funding, staffing and other needed resources to engage in robust disease surveillance, prevention, treatment, and response efforts and public health emergency preparedness, response and recovery; and

WHEREAS, AI/AN peoples continue to face serious and enduring health inequities across a variety of chronic and acute health conditions, and have a life expectancy that is on average five and a half years less than the national average; and

WHEREAS, these health inequities are exacerbated by the chronic and pervasive underfunding of the Indian Health Service (IHS) and vital Indian health programs across the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the federal government at-large; and

WHEREAS, tribal nations are experts in what their public health needs and priorities are; and

WHEREAS, the trust responsibility and government-to-government relationship call for direct funding to tribal governments, and not pass-through funds from state governments; and

WHEREAS, tribal nations are ineligible for the majority of federal public health block grants and capacity-building grants administered by agencies under HHS; and

WHEREAS, when eligible, because of the requirements and structure of the grants, most tribal nations have difficulty competing for those grants against states, cities, and counties.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) work with National Indian Health Board (NIHB) to call upon Congress to enact legislation providing additional, substantial, direct, and reoccurring public health funding to tribal nations, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations to bolster public health services, capacity, and infrastructure; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI work with NIHB to call upon the federal government to conduct a full accounting of all public health dollars provided directly to tribal nations and tribal organizations, and to work with tribal nations, through consultation, to increase direct access to vital public health resources; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

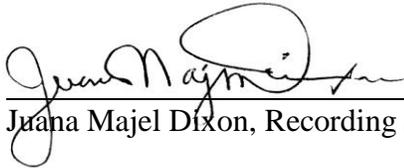
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2019 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, October 20-25, 2019, with a quorum present.



Fawn Sharp, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel Dixon, Recording Secretary