

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Lowey and McCollum and Ranking Members Granger and Joyce,

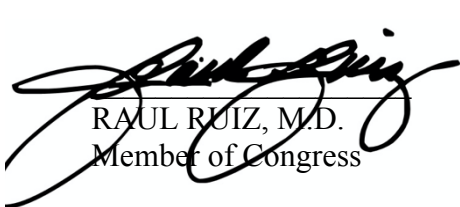
We write to respectfully request that you provide robust funding, above the Fiscal Year 2020 level, for the Indian Health Service (IHS) to fulfill our trust responsibility to provide for the health and wellness of tribal communities. Increasing investments in health care clinics, health education, and the delivery of health services will improve health outcomes and social and economic conditions for American Indian and Alaska Natives across our nation.

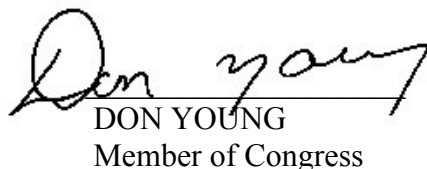
The IHS provides essential health care services to approximately 2.6 million American Indians and Alaska Natives. The federal government is entrusted with the responsibility of providing health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives, yet the IHS continues to be severely underfunded. The lack of sufficient funding has resulted in chronic turnover, staffing shortages, and aging infrastructure that contribute to severe mismanagement, a low quality of care, and access challenges.

American Indians and Alaska Natives suffer health disparities that include increased rates of diabetes, suicide, and chronic diseases, leading to shorter life expectancies compared to the general population. We must break this cycle and bridge the access gap to improve lives in tribal communities. This starts with the federal government adequately funding the IHS and upholding our government's promise to improve the health of American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Increased funding is critical to addressing the unique health challenges and disparities facing patients in IHS-sponsored medical centers. We ask that you provide robust funding for the IHS in FY2021 at a level above FY2020, consistent with our federal trust obligation to ensure American Indian and Alaska Natives have the health care resources they need to live healthy and productive lives.

Sincerely,


RAUL RUIZ, M.D.
Member of Congress


DON YOUNG
Member of Congress


Member of Congress

Letter also signed by:

- KELLY ARMSTRONG
- CYNTHIA AXNE
- NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGÁN
- JACK BERGMAN
- TONY CÁRDENAS
- JASON CROW
- SHARICE L. DAVIDS
- DANNY K. DAVIS
- PETER A. DEFazio
- DIANA DEGETTE
- MARK DESAULNIER
- TULSI GABBARD
- RUBEN GALLEGO
- JOHN GARAMENDI
- JIMMY GOMEZ
- DEB HAALAND
- ALCEE L. HASTINGS
- KENDRA S. HORN
- STEVEN HORSFORD
- PRAMILA JAYAPAL
- DUSTY JOHNSON
- WILLIAM R. KEATING
- ROBIN L. KELLY
- RO KHANNA
- DANIEL T. KILDEE
- RICK LARSEN
- ZOE LOFGREN
- BEN RAY LUJÁN
- GWEN MOORE
- MARKWAYNE MULLIN
- GRACE F. NAPOLITANO
- TOM O'HALLERAN
- ILHAN OMAR
- DEAN PHILIPS
- GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLÁN
- ELISSA SLOTKIN
- GREG STANTON
- JUAN VARGAS
- FREDERICA S. WILSON