

National Indian  
Health Board



September 30, 2021

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Brian Schatz  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs  
838 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Re: Budget Reconciliation and Indian Health Care**

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, and Senator Schatz:

On behalf of the 574 Federally-recognized Indian Tribal nations and Member Organizations the National Indian Health Board (NIHB) represents, we write to you regarding the Budget Reconciliation measure. We respectfully request that you protect that Indian program funding - for health care in particular - from any reductions that may be considered or imposed on the final Budget Reconciliation legislation.

We thank you for including in the Budget Resolution, S.Con.Res. 14, an allocation of \$20.5 Billion to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (SCIA) for Indian health care and other programs. In addition, Indian Tribes may be eligible for other health-related resources within the Finance and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committees jurisdictions.

The House of Representatives Committees have passed their portions of the Budget Reconciliation. The health care funding, primarily for facility-related costs, in the House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee bill is approximately \$3.1 Billion, *far below* the health care needs of Tribal communities.

The NIHB has continued to [advocate](#) for sufficient resources to meet the federal government's chronically underfunded health care obligations to Tribal communities. Indeed, Indian Country is united in seeking additional health care funding as reflected in several Interorganizational [letters](#) sent to Congressional leadership since April 2021. The requests in these letters outline the serious disparities in Tribal communities.

The United States has consistently failed to uphold its trust responsibilities and treaty obligations to provide for adequate health care services to Tribal nations. Funding these unmet obligations would address severe disparities and help fulfill the United States trust responsibility to Tribes. Moreover, this

National Indian  
Health Board

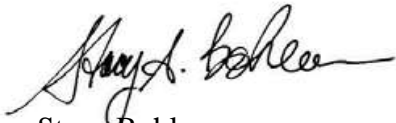


funding would achieve the President's domestic agenda goals of increasing access to health care and supporting the implementation of the *Affordable Care Act*.

We recognize that negotiations continue on the final Budget Reconciliation measure. However, the severity of the federal government's unmet health care obligations to Tribal Nations substantially outweighs any imperceptible adjustments to the final measure that this reduction in funding might produce.

We appreciate your efforts in supporting Indian health care and look forward to continuing our work together on a final Budget Reconciliation measure. Please contact the NIHB CEO, Stacy Bohlen, at [sbohlen@nihb.org](mailto:sbohlen@nihb.org) if you have any questions or need further information. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,



Stacy Bohlen  
CEO  
National Indian Health Board




Ayn White  
Executive Director  
Albuquerque Indian Health Board, Inc.



Alberta Unok  
President/CEO  
Alaska Native Health Board



Will Funmaker  
Executive Director  
Great Lakes Area Tribal Health Board



Jerilyn Church  
CEO  
Great Plains Tribal Leaders' Health Board

National Indian  
Health Board



*William F. Snell Jr.*

William Snell, Jr.  
Executive Director  
Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders' Council

*Kirk Francis*

Chief Kirk Francis  
President  
United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty  
Protection Fund