



CALL TO ACTION: Indian Health Service Advance Appropriations

June 14-17, 2022

Templates for Tribal Leaders to Contact Their Members of Congress

National Indian Health Board and the National Congress of American Indians join forces to elevate Tribal Leader voices to Capitol Hill on securing Advance Appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS). This action alert is for the House Appropriations Committee - we ask the committee to support and include IHS advance appropriations in the current appropriations bill.

IHS Advance Appropriations ~ Letters/ Email Template & Call Script

Attached are two separate letter templates to be sent to (1) House Committee on Appropriations and House Subcommittee on Interior Environment, and Related Agencies, (2) Senate Committee on Appropriations and Senate Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies.

To email or write to the House Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies and Committee on Appropriations and use the template provided below. Please send the letter to following web addresses:

- Interior Appropriations Subcommittee Chairwoman **Chellie Pingree**:
<https://pingree.house.gov/contact/contactform.htm>
- Interior Appropriations Subcommittee Ranking Member **Dave Joyce**:
<https://joyce.house.gov/contact>
- House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman **Rosa DeLauro**:
<https://delauro.house.gov/contact>
- House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member **Kay Granger**:
<https://kaygranger.house.gov/email>

To email or write to the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies and the Senate Committee on Appropriations use the template provided below. Please send the letter to following web addresses

- Senate Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Ranking Member **Lisa Murkowski**: <https://www.murkowski.senate.gov/contact/email>
- Senate Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Chairman **Jeff Merkley**:
<https://www.merkley.senate.gov/contact>
- Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman **Patrick Leahy**:
<https://www.leahy.senate.gov/contact>
- Senate Appropriations Committee Ranking Member **Richard Shelby**:
<https://www.shelby.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/emailsenatorshelby>



***** DRAFT LETTER TO HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS *****

[CC'ing your home Member of Congress is a good idea]

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
2162 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Dave Joyce
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
2065 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, Chairman Pingree, and Ranking Member Joyce:

On behalf of [TRIBE], we write to you to respectfully request that **House Committee on Appropriations** include Advance Appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS) in the next appropriation cycle. Congressional supporters of the treaty and trust obligation for health along with the Biden Administration made great progress in the FY2022 budget but were short circuited due to the passage of a CR. Advanced Appropriations for IHS has been under consideration by Congress for several years and was supported by President Biden's Budget Request for FY 2022 at \$9 billion. Again, during the last appropriations cycle, Advanced Appropriations had traction in the Senate as the most recent draft Senate Appropriations bill for FY 2022 included \$6.58 billion in Advance Appropriations for IHS. The Indian Country budget is non-partisan, and we believe we have the strongest alignment of legislative and administrative support such that tribes are optimistic Advanced Appropriations is achievable.

Advance Appropriations would help shield the IHS and Tribal health systems from the harmful impacts of Continuing Resolutions and government shutdowns. These events create uncertainty for the Indian health care system. More tragically, these events destabilize the continuity of care for American Indian and Alaska Native patients. This harm is compounded by the lengthy shutdowns which have ranged from 5 days in 2002 to 197 days in 2011. This uncertainty affects long term planning, recruitment, and retention (especially in rural reservation communities), quality of healthcare services, and healthcare treatment. As a result, health programs are left to make long-term decisions with only short-term money available. IHS and tribes must determine whether and how they can enter contracts with outside vendors and suppliers, plan programmatic activities, or maintain current personnel. Advance Appropriations will alleviate adverse impacts to the IHS and Tribal health programs arising from Continuing Resolutions and government shutdowns.

Your support and passage of Advance Appropriations in the next appropriations cycle would begin the necessary process for establishing budget certainty and help improve the health care delivery system for Tribal nations and their citizens. It is a meaningful step in fulfilling the United States' trust responsibility and treaty obligations to Tribal nations for Indian health care.

On behalf of [Tribe or Tribal organization], I strongly urge you to support this necessary funding level and advance appropriations. If you have any questions about our request, please feel free to contact [number or email]. Thank you for considering our views in drafting Appropriations legislation.

Sincerely,

***** DRAFT LETTER TO SENATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ON APPROPRIATIONS*****

[CC'ing your 2 home Senators is a good idea]

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa A. Murkowski
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Shelby,

On behalf of [TRIBE], we write to you to respectfully request that ***Senate Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies*** include Advance Appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS) in the next appropriation cycle. Congressional supporters of the treaty and trust obligation for health along with the Biden Administration made great progress in the FY2022 budget but were short circuited due to the passage of a CR. Advanced Appropriations for IHS has been under consideration by Congress for several years and was supported by President Biden's Budget Request for FY 2022 at \$9 billion. Again, during the last appropriations cycle, Advanced Appropriations had traction in the Senate as the most recent draft Senate Appropriations bill for FY 2022 included \$6.58 billion in Advance Appropriations for IHS. The Indian Country budget is non-partisan, and we believe we have the strongest alignment of legislative and administrative support such that tribes are optimistic Advanced Appropriations is achievable.

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On behalf of [Tribe or Tribal organization], I strongly urge you to support this necessary funding level and advance appropriations. If you have any questions about our request, please feel free to contact [number or email]. Thank you for considering our views in drafting Appropriations legislation.

Sincerely,

ADVANCED APPROPRIATIONS ~ CALL SCRIPT

Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-2771

“My name is [your name] and I am [Tribe, Tribal organization] from [city, state]. I am calling/writing today to urge you, as a member of the House Committee on Appropriations, to include advanced appropriations for the Indian Health Service in the Interior Appropriations bill. While promising progress was made on this initiative in both the House and the Senate, it was not included in the 2022 IHS appropriation and the Continuing Resolution (CR) thwarted this effort such that we must start over. Tribes are, however, remaining optimistic that we will achieve IHS Advance Appropriations during this appropriations cycle. We need your help to get there.

Funding the IHS through Advance Appropriations would create parity with the Veterans' Administration, the only other federal program providing health care directly to citizens. Tribal nations and our communities are in great need of Advance Appropriations because CR's and government shutdowns significantly damage our ability to provide health care to our People by bringing our health care systems to a halt.

CRs and government shutdowns have become a way of doing business and unfortunately adversely affect the Indian health system by creating uncertainty in planning, hiring, purchasing, building and delivering continuity of care in Tribal communities; especially when those communities are rural and health care provider recruitment and retention are already seemingly unsurmountable obstacles.

[If you can briefly, share a quick experience how a shutdown affected your community. For example, “Our clinic lost two doctors when the government shutdown”.]

The bottom line is Indian Country loses ground when the Government Shutdowns or we have to operate under a CR. We need certainty, stability, and full funding. Advance Appropriations would help provide stable funding and certainty. It is a top priority of Indian Tribes across the country.

I respectfully urge the House Committee on Appropriations to support and include Advance Appropriations in the next appropriations cycle.

Thank you.

Note to Tribal Leaders:

Don't take for granted that your Member of Congress in your home district understands or supports the issue. Call them to request that they support advanced appropriations, sign on to a dear colleague letter, sponsor legislation that calls for Advanced Appropriations and ask them if they will support it.
