

National Council of Urban Indian Health

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Excellence, Equity, Effectiveness

November 6, 2009

Representative Nick Rahall
2307 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rahall:

On behalf of the National Council of Urban Indian Health, I am writing to ask for your support of H.R. 3962, the Affordable Health Care for America Act. Specifically, we ask that you support the inclusion of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) as part of H.R. 3962. The addition of IHCIA in H.R. 3962 honors the trust responsibility incumbent upon the United States to provide health care to Indian people regardless of where they reside.

IHCIA includes desperately needed modernizations and updates to the Indian health delivery system. By including IHCIA in the national health reform bill Congress will ensure that American Indians and Alaska Natives are able to maximize the benefits of the national health care reform effort. This version of the IHCIA in H.R. 3962 is *exactly* the same as the IHCIA reauthorization in H.R. 2708, which has broad support throughout Indian Country.

We have been fighting for 10 years to get IHCIA reauthorized. This is our only chance to pass the reauthorization of IHCIA this Congress. And it's a good chance – the best chance Indian people have ever had – but only if we have your vote for H.R. 3962.

We believe in addition to modernizing the Indian health care system, providing greater coverage to Americans, and reducing cost, the issue of health care reform is also an important component of economic recovery. Without controlling the spiraling costs of health care our economy will not be able to sustain the current trend of health care costs. Health care reform is essential to a strong enduring economic recovery. Additionally, current proposed health care reform and IHCIA legislation would help revitalize depressed urban centers by providing employment, community centers, and safe spaces for vulnerable individuals. The continued economic recovery depends in part upon efforts to retain employment positions through control of skyrocketing health care costs to employers, families and the individual health care consumer.

Thank you for your consideration and support of H.R. 3962. If the National Council of Urban Indian Health can be of assistance, please contact NCUIH's Policy Analyst Danielle Delaney at 202-544-0344.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dave Rambeau".

Dave Rambeau
President
National Council of Urban Indian Health