



June 5, 2019

Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The National Council of Urban Indian Health writes to respectfully request that the Senate Committee on Appropriations honor the United States' trust responsibility to urban Indians by passing a budget that supports urban Indian health care priorities.

Last month the House Appropriations Committee approved the FY 2020 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill that included an approximated \$30 million increase for urban Indian health care in the Indian Health Service budget-bringing funding to **\$81 million** for Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs). We respectfully request the Senate Committee on Appropriations honor the actions of their esteemed colleagues in the House and increase *the urban Indian health line item* to **\$81 million**.

At a minimum, *the urban Indian health line item* should be increased to **\$81 million**, which is a little over 1% of the IHS budget and would honor the United States' trust responsibility, fulfill the National Tribal Budget Formulation Workgroup recommendation to increase funding and support urban Indian health care needs. Over 70% of American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) live in urban settings and Congress has long recognized their trust obligation to healthcare.

The Indian Health Services (IHS) funding is authorized under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) [25 U.S.C. § 160 et seq.] Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) are the only part of the Indian health System (IHS/Tribal facilities/UIOs) that only receive funding from one source within the IHS budget - *the urban Indian line item*. Currently, UIOs receive less than 1% of the IHS budget creating serious budget constraints and still provide culturally-competent and quality healthcare. There are 41(UIOs) in 22 states and they are an integral part of the Indian health system.

We urge the Committee support urban Indian health care priorities with a "**do pass**" of funding in the amount of **\$81 million** for the *urban Indian health line item*.





*NCUIH is the premier national representative of Urban Indian Organizations receiving grants under Title V of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) and the American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) they serve. Founded in 1998, NCUIH is a 501(c)(3) organization created to support the development of quality, accessible, and culturally sensitive health care programs for AI/ANs living in urban communities. NCUIH fulfills its mission by serving as a resource center providing advocacy, education, training, and leadership for Urban Indian health care providers. NCUIH strives to improve the health of the approximately 78 percent of the AI/AN population living in urban settings, supported by quality, accessible health care centers.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maureen Rosette".

Maureen Rosette, J.D. (Chippewa Cree)  
President

CC: Membership of Committee on Appropriations  
Membership of Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

