



**NORTHWEST
PORTLAND
AREA
INDIAN
HEALTH
BOARD**

Burns-Paiute Tribe
Chehalis Tribe
Coeur d' Alene Tribe
Confederated Tribes of Colville
Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower
Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Confederated Tribes of Siletz
Confederated Tribes of Umatilla
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
Coquille Tribe
Cow Creek Tribe
Cowlitz Tribe
Hoh Tribe
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe
Kalispel Tribe
Klamath Tribe
Kootenai Tribe
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe
Lummi Tribe
Makah Tribe
Muckleshoot Tribe
Nez Perce Tribe
Nisqually Tribe
Nooksack Tribe
NW Band of Shoshone Tribe
Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe
Puyallup Tribe
Quileute Tribe
Quinalt Tribe
Samish Indian Nation
Sauk-Suiattle Tribe
Shoalwater Bay Tribe
Shoshone-Bannock Tribe
Skokomish Tribe
Snoqualmie Tribe
Spokane Tribe
Squaxin Island Tribe
Stillaguamish Tribe
Suquamish Tribe
Swinomish Tribe
Tulalip Tribe
Upper Skagit Tribe
Yakama Nation

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RESOLUTION # 18-03-07

**A CALL TO CONGRESS TO SUPPORT AN INCREASE TO INDIAN
HEALTH SERVICE FUNDING FOR INDIAN HEALTH PROFESSIONS**

WHEREAS, the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board {hereinafter "NPAIHB" or "Board" was established in 1972 to assist Tribal governments to improve the health status and quality of life of Indian people; and

WHEREAS, the NPAIHB is a "tribal organization" as defined by the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act {P.L. 93-638 seq. et al) that represents forty-three federally recognized tribes in the states of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington ("member tribes"); and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the definitions of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act at 25 USC §450b, a tribal organization is recognized as a governing body of any Indian tribe and includes any legally established organization of Indians which is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by such governing body or which is democratically elected by the adult members of the Indian community to be served by such organization and which includes the maximum participation of Indians in all phases of its activities; and

WHEREAS, the NPAIHB is dedicated to assisting and promoting the health needs and concerns of Indian people; and

WHEREAS, the primary goal of the NPAIHB is to improve the health and quality of life of its member tribes; and

WHEREAS, American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) have very limited access to health care services and are disproportionately affected by health disparities and these disparities are directly attributed to the lack of health professionals in Indian communities, which has caused a serious access issue and backlog of many health services for AI/AN people; and

WHEREAS, many of our member tribes have great difficulty and face significant challenges in recruiting health professionals into their communities that results in further challenges in ensuring continuity and comprehensive healthcare for AI/AN people; and

WHEREAS, the current vacancy rates make it nearly impossible to run a quality health care system; and

WHEREAS, competition for primary care physicians and other practitioners is at an all time high; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 2016 IHS Pipeline Program data, there are high vacancy rates (physicians-34%, pharmacists-16%, nurses-24%, dentists 26%, physician assistants-32%, AP nurses- 35%) in IHS facilities; and

WHEREAS, the long term solution is to increase the number of AI/AN health professionals serving Native communities and ensure that funding is available to support their education; and

WHEREAS, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCA) P.L. 94-437, as amended, authorizes the Indian Health Service (IHS) Scholarship program, Loan Repayment Program, health professions training related grants, and recruitment and retention activities ("Indian Health Professions" program) and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the IHS Scholarship Program funded:

- all 17 physicians and all 5 dentists who applied for the scholarship who were eligible by score;
- 17 of 25 (68%) of eligible physician assistants and nurse practitioners;
- 16 of 34 (47%) of eligible bachelor level nurses;
- 21 of 112 (19%) of eligible undergraduate pre-health professions students were funded; and

WHEREAS, all eligible unfunded student applicants to the IHS Scholarship Program were AI/AN from federal or state recognized tribes.

WHEREAS, the IHS Loan Repayment Program pays \$20,000 annually in student loans which is \$5,000 less than the National Health Service Corps; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, 613 (33%) of the health professionals who applied for the Loan Repayment Program were not funded and only 19% of loan repayment recipients were AI/AN; and

WHEREAS, Indian Health Professions funding must reflect the significant workforce needs in Indian country and support our AI/AN people pursuing health professions; and

WHEREAS, for FY 2018, Indian Health Professions was funded at \$49 million, and for FY 2019, the President's FY 2019 Budget Proposal for the Indian Health Service proposed a \$6 million dollar cut (-12.1%) to the program; and

WHEREAS, it has been estimated that \$33 million is needed for Indian Health Professions to fully fund the IHS Scholarship Program (\$3.3 million) and Loan Repayment Program for all eligible applicants; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NPAIHB and our member tribes call on Congress to support an Indian Health Service funding increase for IHS Indian Health Professions to fully fund scholarships for all qualified applicants to IHS Scholarship Program and to support the Loan

Repayment Program to fund all physicians, nurse practitioners, physician's assistants, nurses and other direct care practitioners.

CERTIFICATION

NO. 18.03.07

The foregoing resolution was duly adopted at the regular session of the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board. A quorum being established; 23 for, 0 against, 0 abstain on April 19, 2018.

Andrew C. Joseph Jr.

Chairman

April 19, 2018

Date

Gregory J. Abraham

Secretary