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HILL UPDATES

FY 2011 Budget Debate Extended by Another CR

With the threat of a government shutdown again looming when the previous continuing resolution (CR) was set to expire on March 18th, Congress passed yet another short-term solution to Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 budget problems last week. On March 15th, the House voted in favor of H. J. Res. 48, *The Additional Continuing Appropriations of 2011*, by a margin of 271 to 158, with 186 Republicans and 85 Democrats supporting the measure. Then, on March 17th, the Senate passed this bill by a vote of 87-13. Nine Republicans and four Democrats voted against it. President Obama then signed H. J. Res. into law on March 18th.

This three week CR continues federal funding at FY 2010 levels, while cutting approximately \$2 billion per week. Similar to the previous short-term CR, this bill

achieves spending reductions by reducing or terminating existing government programs for a savings of \$3.5 billion. Many of these 25 programs were not funded in the President's FY 2012 budget request to Congress or are terminations supported by Congressional Democrats. Another \$2.6 billion in spending cuts is derived from the terminations of earmarks reauthorized in a previous CR.

Although this additional extension buys Congress and the Obama Administration even more time to continue negotiations on permanent funding for the remaining six months of FY 2011, a proposal is not yet within reach. The White House and all Congressional Leaders agree that the federal government cannot continue to be funded through CRs and agree that this will be the last. Compromise between both parties will be required to avert a government shutdown by the next deadline, April 8th.

Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Receives Testimony on FY 2012 Budget

One month after the release of the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Budget Request to Congress, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs held an oversight hearing on its implications for Tribal programs. Chairman Daniel Akaka (D-HI) and Vice-Chairman John Barrasso (R-WY) presided over the hearing, and also in attendance were Senators Jon Tester (D-MT), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Tom Udall (D-NM), Mike Johanns (R-NE),



and Al Franken (D-MN). Testimony was provided by Larry Echo Hawk, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs in the Department of Interior, Yvette Roubideaux, Director of the Indian Health Service, and several respected Tribal leaders, including John Blackhawk, Chairman of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, who is also a NIHB Board Member representing the Aberdeen area.

Dr. Roubideaux's testimony emphasized the sizeable increase IHS received in the President's request, as compared to other federal agencies. For FY 2012, the President requested \$4.6 billion for the Indian Health Service, which is an increase of \$571.4 million or 14% over FY 2010 enacted funding. This, as Dr. Roubideaux said in her testimony, "reflects a sustained commitment by President Obama to honor treaty commitments made by the United States and to provide for a necessary improvement in our future." Targeted investments in areas such as Contract Health Services, the Catastrophic Health Emergency Fund, and Contract Support Costs are included in this increase, as well as the maintenance of current services. She also discussed a proposed \$7 million in savings through the cancelation of several grant programs.

Following Dr. Roubideaux's testimony, Committee Members had the opportunity to ask her questions regarding the funding levels for IHS contained in the President's budget request. Based on their questions, it is clear that the senators in attendance are tuned in to the health concerns of Indian Country. Chairman Akaka requested more information on lower funding for sanitation facilities, as well as for an update on addressing the issues brought to light in a Committee report on activities in the Aberdeen Area. Vice Chairman Barrasso asked Dr. Roubideaux about the Contract Health Services formula and its effect on the mitigation and treatment of diabetes. Senator Tester expressed a desire to know more about how IHS plans to address the youth suicide epidemic in Tribal nations. Senator Murkowski wanted to ensure that the budget will allow for equipment and

staffing packages commitments for joint-venture projects will be honored. Finally, Senator Franken was especially concerned with the availability of funding for mid-level dental therapists throughout the IHS system.

The two witness panels that followed consisted of Tribal leaders and experts such as Chairman Ron Allen of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Earl Barbry Sr. Chairman of both USET and the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, and Chairman John Blackhawk of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. Testifying from an on-the-ground, personal perspective, the Tribal representatives spoke to the Committee about how all aspects of the FY 2012 budget will affect them and how it could be improved. In his testimony on behalf of NCAI, Chairman Allen noted that while increases to IHS funding are truly appreciated, when those increases are measured against Tribal health, one will realize that we still have a long way to go in the quest for health parity. Chairman John Blackhawk echoed this in his own testimony saying, "The negative effects of the insufficient funds appropriated continue to disrupt the well-being of Native American Nations."

Any Tribe or Tribal organization is welcome to submit written comments on the President's FY 2012 budget recommendations to be entered into the Committee's record. Please email testimony to testimony@indian.senate.gov by Tuesday March 29th.

ADMINISTRATION UPDATES

IHS Requests Tribal Input on Proposed Grant Savings, MoA with DOI on Substance Abuse Plan

In a blog post on March 11th, Indian Health Service Director, Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, requested comments from Tribes on the less than \$6 million in proposed grant savings within the FY 2012 Congressional Justification. For more information on the



proposed savings, please refer to NIHB's Washington Report dated March 11th. Comments may be emailed to consultation@ihs.gov

The Director also initiated consultation with Tribes via a 'Dear Tribal Leader' letter regarding priorities for the implementation of the updated Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of the Interior on Indian alcohol and substance abuse prevention and treatment. Under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act reauthorization, IHS and DOI are given new authorities to evaluate and improve existing programs. Tribal input is essential moving forward. Comments may be submitted via email by May 30th to DOIMOACOMMENTS@ihs.gov.

NIHB UPDATES

NIHB Celebrates the 1st Anniversary of the Affordable Care Act

Wednesday, March 23rd, marked the one-year anniversary of the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCA). As we reflect on this milestone, NIHB remembers and honors the past decade of tireless work of Tribes, Tribal leaders, Tribal members, Tribal organizations and friends of Indian Country in advocating for the passage of the permanent reauthorization of the IHCA.

To celebrate this historic occasion, the National Indian Health Board, National Congress of American Indians and National Council of Urban Indian Health, reviewed the past year's implementation activities in *Moving Indian Country Forward: Health Care Reform: A year later*. This report summarizes the implementation and consultation on many key provisions in the ACA and IHCA. To view the report, as well as a slideshow timeline of IHCA advocacy, please visit the NIHB website at: www.nihb.org/indianhealthreform/home

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WHITE HOUSE TRIBAL OUTREACH PHONE CALL ON ACA

MARCH 28, 2011 AT 5:00 PM EST
CALL-IN: (800) 553-0288 (No passcode, just provide conference call title: Indian Healthcare)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE HEARING ON, "THE TRUE COST OF PPACA: EFFECTS ON THE BUDGET AND JOBS"

2123 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC
MARCH 30, 2011 (10:00 AM)

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS FY 2012 BUDGET HEARING WITH IHS DIRECTOR YVETTE ROUBIDEAUX

B-308 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC
MARCH 31, 2011 (9:30 AM)

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HHS, AND EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS HEARING ON ACA IMPLEMENTATION WITH SECRETARY KATHLEEN SEBELIUS

2358-C RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC
APRIL 1, 2011 (10:00 AM)

NIHB AND AAP BRIEFING ON SUICIDE, DEPRESSION, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG NATIVE YOUTH

SVC-215 CAPITOL VISITOR'S CENTER
WASHINGTON, DC
APRIL 5, 2011 (9:30—11:00 AM)
RSVP TO KMIZZI@AAP.ORG



NIHB to Host National Tribal Health Reform Implementation Summit

What does the Affordable Care Act mean to me as an individual? How do Tribes participate in State Health Insurance Exchanges? How do I insure my Tribal employees? What is the Obama administration doing to ensure a smooth implementation process?

One year later, a number of questions—new and old—surround the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. Through education and shared experience, it is our goal to empower Tribes, health professionals, and individuals to navigate and employ the benefits of the new health care law. As implementation continues, Tribal involvement and access are crucial to achieving positive change in Indian health.

That is why NIHB is hosting a *National Tribal Health Reform Implementation Summit* to be held on April 19-20, 2011 at the Washington Court Hotel in Washington, DC. With separate tracks for all levels of familiarity with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, as well as the reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, the Summit will cover such topics as the basics of health reform, navigating federal agencies, and accessing new programs.

Tribes, providers, advocates, and individuals will have the unique opportunity to hear from key Administration officials, Congressional staff, and other experts with up-to-the-minute knowledge of Health Care Reform and its benefit to Indian Country. This is an event not to be missed. For more information or to register, please refer to the NIHB website.



National Tribal Health Reform Implementation Summit

April 19 – 20, 2011

HOST HOTEL
Washington Court Hotel
525 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001
1-800-321-3010

Room Rate: \$179.00

Be sure to mention: NIHB National Tribal Health Reform Implementation Summit

Register at: www.nihb.org

For more information, contact:

Jennifer Cooper
Legislative Director
jcooper@nihb.org

Liz Malerba
Legislative Assistant
lmalerba@nihb.org

