



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Richardson calls on Federal Delegation to Support Reauthorization of Indian Health Care Improvement Act

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson today sent a letter to all five members of New Mexico's congressional delegation urging them to support the reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA).

“New Mexico cannot nor should not bear sole responsibility for the federal government’s trust to provide adequate health and human services for Indian people,” Governor Richardson wrote. “Therefore, I am urging you to enact Senate Bill 1057. The IHCIA expired in 2000 and reauthorization is long overdue.”

First enacted in 1976, the IHCIA has been reauthorized four times but Congress has failed to move forward with it since 2000.

In November, the Governor addressed the 22 leaders of New Mexico’s Indian nations, pueblos and tribes at a health and human services Tribal Consultation. The Consultation was held to find ways in which the state and tribal governments can work together toward solving health and human services issues facing Native Americans. Tribal leaders urged the Governor to continue to speak up on behalf of New Mexico’s Native Americans and specifically requested his assistance in getting the IHCIA reauthorized.

Last February the Albuquerque Indian Health Center reduced services due to cuts in federal funding, which meant that many urban Indian people were left with fewer options for health care. Many of them began seeking care at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center.

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