



For Immediate Release
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Governor Bill Richardson Urges House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Reauthorize Indian Health Care Improvement Act

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson today sent a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi urging her to make the Indian Health Care Improvement Act a priority and move urgently to reauthorize the resolution.

Governor Richardson noted in his letter, which was also sent to New Mexico's congressional delegation, House Minority Leader John Boehner, and the co-chairs of the House Native American Caucus, that the Indian Health Care Improvement Act has languished since 2000 without Congressional renewal.

As a result, many services and programs in New Mexico have been underfunded or eliminated.

“Past underfunding and elimination of services has contributed to persistent health disparities among Native Americans,” the Governor stated in his letter. He pointed out that Native Americans have the highest rates of death from diabetes, pneumonia/influenza, alcoholism and cirrhosis in the state.

Earlier this year, the Senate passed its version of the Act. Governor Richardson thanked the Speaker for her consideration and work “to rectify this national travesty.”

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