



January 14, 2013

**NORTHWEST  
PORTLAND  
AREA  
INDIAN  
HEALTH  
BOARD**

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Chehalis Tribe  
Cocur d' Alene Tribe  
Colville Tribe  
Coos, Suislaw &  
Lower Umpqua Tribe  
Coquille Tribe  
Cow Creek Tribe  
Cowlitz Tribe  
Grand Ronde Tribe  
Hoh Tribe  
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe  
Kalispel Tribe  
Klamath Tribe  
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Lummi Tribe  
Makah Tribe  
Muckleshoot Tribe  
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Umatilla Tribe  
Upper Skagit Tribe  
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Yakama Nation

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The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

The Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) is a Tribal organization organized under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (P.L. 93-638) to represent all forty-three federally-recognized Tribes in Idaho, Oregon and Washington. On behalf of our member Tribes, we are writing to request your consideration to postpone the FY 2015 HHS Department-wide budget consultation session.

The Indian Health Service (IHS) budget formulation workgroup and the National Indian Health Board have requested that you postpone the FY 2015 HHS Department-wide budget consultation session until after the Administration has sent its FY 2014 budget request to Congress. We believe that this is a prudent request since the President's request serves as a baseline for Tribal budget recommendations. Having access to the President's request helps to understand fiscal policies and how they will impact Indian people and the IHS budget. Northwest Tribal leaders want information from the President's request to develop reliable and accurate recommendations so they can make their case to the Department and Congress in good consciousness without fear of accusations of exaggerated estimates or inflated needs. There is nothing to be gained by overestimating the funding required to meet the health care needs of Indian people. This will help to maintain the integrity of estimates and not inflate amounts in the manner of conventional negotiations.

The Administration and Congress will be addressing several fiscal issues such as the debt ceiling, long-term tax policy to generate revenue, budget sequestration, and completion of FY 2013 appropriation process. The Whitehouse has indicated that the complication of these issues will delay the release of the President's budget to Congress. Postponing the FY 2015 HHS budget consultation session until after release of the President's request will provide Tribal leaders the opportunity to evaluate its budget policies and prepare their recommendations on these issues.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Andrew Joseph, Jr., NPAIHB Chair  
Colville Tribal Council Member

cc. Yvette Roubideaux, Director, Indian Health Service  
Paul Dioguardi, Director, HHS Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs (IEA)  
Stacey Ecoffey, Principal Advisor for Tribal Affairs, IEA