

July 10, 2012

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Importance of Preserving the Protections and Benefits of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act

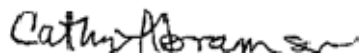
Dear Speaker Boehner:

On behalf of the nation's 566 Federally Recognized Tribes and urban Indians in the United States, we urge the House of Representatives not to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Affordable Care Act), which includes the permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA). From the perspective of Indian Country, the passage of the Affordable Care Act – inclusive of the IHCIA – is the most significant advancement in Federal health policy for America's indigenous people. This important law protects and enhances the Indian health system by ensuring that Constitutional and treaty rights are protected while allowing better access to health care.

By repealing the Affordable Care Act, Congress would erase its achievement of the long-overdue reauthorization of the IHCIA, which is the fundamental statutory authority for the delivery of health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives. The IHCIA provides a wealth of new resources and opportunities for tribal health care institutions, families, providers and patients. Indian Country waited and worked desperately for updates to the Indian health delivery system. Now, with the inclusion of the permanent reauthorization of the IHCIA in Affordable Care Act, the Indian health care system has begun a new chapter in the delivery of quality health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives. Over the next several years as more provisions of the IHCIA are put into practice, the delivery of health care for Americans will improve.

As the House considers repeal of the health care reform, I respectfully ask again that you do not repeal the Affordable Care Act and, with it, the IHCIA. Any repeal of the Affordable Care Act would have devastating consequences for Indian Country and adversely impact tribal efforts to address the health challenges that affect American Indians and Alaska Natives. Thank you for your consideration.

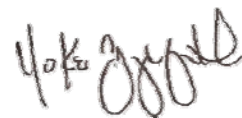
Sincerely,



Cathy Abramson
Chairperson
National Indian Health Board



Jefferson Keel
President
National Congress of
American Indian



Moke Eaglefeather
President,
National Council of Urban
Indian Health