

**Cindy Darcy Presentation January 19, 2021,
to the NPAIHB Quarterly Board Meeting:
Considerations for Setting Priorities for the 117th Congress**

New Administration's priorities

- Continued COVID-19 relief (American Rescue Plan)
- Cabinet nominations and other Administration appointments
- Full and mandatory funding for Indian Health Service
- Native health data collection and sharing
- Infrastructure proposal (to be released in February)
- Climate change

Roles of your members of Congress

NPAIHB members are in key positions – For example,

Senator Murray is expected to chair the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, and will serve again on the Appropriations Committee.

Senator Merkley is an appropriator. In the House, Representatives Kilmer, Simpson, Newhouse and Herrera Beutler are all appropriators.

Senator Wyden will chair the Senate Finance Committee, and Senator Crapo will be the ranking member. Congressman Blumenauer serves on the House companion committee, Ways and Means.

Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers will be the ranking member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Representative Schrier is newly appointed to that Committee. With its jurisdiction over health care, energy, the environment and the Internet, the Committee is poised to play a major role in President-elect Biden's policy agenda. That committee and the House Ways and Means Committee will be working to enact President-elect Biden's plan for building on the 2010 health care law.

What are those members', those committees' priorities for the 117th Congress?

Senator Wyden recently outlined his Finance Committee priorities, with the COVID-19 pandemic response being the first, but also including drug pricing legislation, proposals to build on the 2010 Affordable Care Act, and racial disparities in health care (which focused a lot last year on the impact of the coronavirus in Indian Country).

House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Grijlava has indicated he will continue to focus on climate change and environmental justice issues this year.

Senator Schatz, who is expected to chair the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, led the Senate Democrats' Special Committee on the Climate Crisis in the 116th Congress. He would likely lead Committee action on addressing the impact of climate on Native American communities.

What broader, major, national legislation will be considered that should have an "Indian Country component"?

For example,

Reauthorization of and amendments to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) - House-passed 2019 bill included positive tribal provisions.

Infrastructure package – The House-passed INVEST Act in 2020 included significant new funding for Indian health program hospitals and outpatient health care facilities, and construction, modernization, improvement, and renovation of water, sewer, and solid waste sanitation facilities located on tribal land that are listed on the IHS Sanitation Facilities Deficiency List. Those should be included in 2021. The infrastructure package might be the legislative vehicle for the Regional Referral Specialty Care Centers proposal.

Family Violence Prevention and Services Act reauthorization

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act reauthorization

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act

What was enacted in the last Congress?

Special Diabetes Program for Indians reauthorized – Amendments?
Reauthorize permanently?

Native veterans bills - Standalones and in the broader veterans' services package

Urban Indian Health Organizations - Amendment to authorize arrangements for the sharing of medical services and facilities, and to provide Federal Tort Claims Act coverage

What legislation was passed by the House or Senate during the 116th Congress, but not by the other chamber, and could be moved quickly in 2021?

Examples of bills passed by the House of Representatives but not by the Senate are:

the “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Enhancement Act” (H.R. 1425), which contains language extending full federal medical assistance percentage to Indian health care and Native Hawaiian health care providers

the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act (H.R. 4957)

the Tribal Health Data Improvement Act (H.R. 7948; no action on S. 4562)

reauthorization of the State Opioid Response grants program at SAMHSA (H.R. 2466)

several bills related to medical marijuana use

Examples of bills passed by the Senate but not by the House of Representatives are:

legislation to provide for the conveyance of certain property in Alaska to the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium located in Sitka, AK (S. 3099 and S. 3100).

a bill to authorize the acquisition of private land to facilitate access to the Desert Sage Youth Wellness Center (S. 4556).

legislation to convey land in Anchorage, AK, to the (S. 3100).

Bills that were introduced in the 116th and prior Congresses:

Advance appropriations authority (S.229/H.R. 1128)

Two-fiscal-year budget authority for IHS (S. 2541/H.R. 1135)

Health Equity and Accountability Act (S. 4819/H.R. 6637)

Tribal Nutrition Improvement Act (H.R. 2494/S. 1307)

Improve behavioral health outcomes for American Indians and Alaska Natives (H.R. 4533/S. 3126)

Improve the public health system in tribal communities by increasing the number of American Indians and Alaska Natives who pursue careers in public health (H.R. 4534)

Fund the Indian Health Service for the next fiscal year in the event of a federal government shutdown (H.R. 195)

Cadence or tempo of 1st session of a new Congress

Organizing of and assignments to congressional committees

Nominations needing Senate confirmation

HELP will consider HHS Secretary

SCIA IHS Director, ANA Commissioner, and others

FY 2022 budget request

Oversight – or general – hearings