

Dear USET Membership,

Please find the letter [here](#) [linked] and attached being circulated by Co-Chairs of the House Native American Caucus, Rep. Tom Cole and Rep. Deb Haaland, to the Budget Committee requesting the inclusion of advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in the FY 2020 House Budget Resolution.

Enacting advance appropriations for federal programs that serve Indian Country is urgent to ensure IHS and BIA are funded one year in advance of the fiscal year and would not be subject to government shutdowns and continuing resolutions. This urgency is demonstrated by the recent 35-day partial government shutdown which caused great harm to the health and safety of American Indians and Alaska Natives due to the lack of funding for fundamental services in Indian Country.

As stated by USET SPF President Kirk Francis during the recent shutdown, **“This shutdown must end now as political gamesmanship has real life negative consequences to Native and non-Natives alike. Furthermore, the time has arrived for the United States to prioritize its commitments to Indian Country by taking the necessary steps to fully fund its obligations to Indian Country and to make all Indian Country funding non-discretionary by moving it to the mandatory/entitlement side of the federal budget as an advance appropriation across the board. Only then can the United States truly state that it is honoring its promises and fulfilling its obligations. ”**

USET SPF is requesting that you contact your Representatives and request they to sign onto the letter. To find your representative, click [here](#) [linked]. A template letter is provided [here](#) [linked] and attached for outreach to your Representative. The deadline to sign onto the letter is **Friday, March 15th**.

Current signees include:

Deb Haaland (D-NM)
Tom Cole (R-OK)
Derek Kilmer (D-WA)
Elise Stefanik (R-NY)
John Moolenaar (R-MI)
David Joyce (R-OH)
Tony Cardenas (D-CA)
John Larson (D-CT)
Joe Courtney (D-CT)
Ruben Gallego (D-AZ)
Jack Bergman (R-MI)
Tom O'Halleran (D-AZ)
Betty McCollum (D-MN)
Ron Kind (D-WI)
Don Young (R-AK)
Gwen Moore (D-WI)
Kendra Horn (D-OK)
Juan Vargas (D-CA)

Also attached is a [letter](#) to the House Native American Caucus with additional information regarding the letter to the House Budget Committee and advance appropriations. Representatives interested in signing onto the letter should contact Heidi Todacheene (heidi.todacheene@mail.house.gov) in Rep. Haaland's office or Joshua Jackson (joshua.jackson@mail.house.gov) in Rep. Cole's office.

Please let me know if you have any questions by contacting me at the information below.

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