



# USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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February 4, 2025

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

RE: Letter of Support for Consideration of Dr. Beverly Maxwell Cotton as the Director for the Indian Health Service

Dear President Trump:

On behalf of the United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund (USET SPF), we write to you as you begin to consider nominations for key leadership positions within the federal government and respectfully ask that you consider Dr. Beverly Maxwell Cotton as your nominee to serve as the Indian Health Service (IHS) Director.

USET SPF is a non-profit, inter-tribal organization advocating on behalf of thirty-three (33) federally recognized Tribal Nations from the Northeastern Woodlands to the Everglades and across the Gulf of Mexico.<sup>1</sup> USET SPF is dedicated to promoting, protecting, and advancing the inherent sovereign rights and authorities of Tribal Nations and in assisting its membership in dealing effectively with public policy issues.

Dr. Cotton's leadership, dedication, and lifelong commitment to advancing healthcare for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities make her an exceptional candidate for this critical role. As an enrolled citizen of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Dr. Cotton brings a deep cultural understanding and personal connection to the opportunities and challenges facing the Indian healthcare delivery system.

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<sup>1</sup> USET SPF member Tribal Nations include: Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (TX), Aroostook Band of Micmac Indians (ME), Catawba Indian Nation (SC), Cayuga Nation (NY), Chickahominy Indian Tribe (VA), Chickahominy Indian Tribe–Eastern Division (VA), Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (NC), Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians (ME), Jena Band of Choctaw Indians (LA), Mashantucket Pequot Indian Tribe (CT), Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe (MA), Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida (FL), Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MS), Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut (CT), Monacan Indian Nation (VA), Nansmond Indian Nation (VA), Narragansett Indian Tribe (RI), Oneida Indian Nation (NY), Pamunkey Indian Tribe (VA), Passamaquoddy Tribe at Indian Township (ME), Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point (ME), Penobscot Indian Nation (ME), Poarch Band of Creek Indians (AL), Rappahannock Tribe (VA), Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (NY), Seminole Tribe of Florida (FL), Seneca Nation of Indians (NY), Shinnecock Indian Nation (NY), Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana (LA), Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe (VA) and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) (MA).

*Because there is Strength in Unity*

She has dedicated 27 years to healthcare leadership, combining clinical expertise with strategic policy implementation to improve health outcomes across Indian Country.

Dr. Cotton's tenure with the IHS has been marked by significant achievements, including serving as the IHS Nashville Area Director, the IHS area in which USET SPF membership resides, building relationships based on trust, transparency and accountability. Because of her strong leadership at the IHS Area Office level, Dr. Cotton was asked to step into a more expansive role within the IHS Headquarters, taking on the position of Deputy Director for Field Operations, where she has been responsible for overseeing critical IHS regions, covering approximately 44% of the agency's federal footprint.

Beyond her impressive credentials, Dr. Cotton has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the principles of Tribal sovereignty, transparency, and accountability in Indian healthcare delivery system. Her ability to collaborate effectively with Tribal Leadership, federal agencies, and policymakers underscores her capacity to lead IHS with integrity, vision, and effectiveness.

USET SPF firmly believes that Dr. Cotton is the right leader to advance IHS forward at this critical time. Her expertise, dedication, and cultural grounding make her uniquely equipped to address the persistent disparities impacting Tribal communities, improve service delivery, and uphold the federal government's trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations.

For these reasons, USET SPF respectfully requests your consideration of Dr. Cotton as the Director of the Indian Health Service. Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you require further information or require additional insights into Dr. Cotton's qualifications and contributions, please contact Ms. Liz Malerba, USET SPF Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, at [LMalerba@usetinc.org](mailto:LMalerba@usetinc.org) or 615-838-5906.

Sincerely,



Kirk Francis  
President



Kitcki A. Carroll  
Executive Director