



MAR 6 2014

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing to notify you of my plan to schedule and personally attend listening sessions in all 12 Indian Health Service (IHS) Areas this year. The purpose of these listening sessions is to provide Tribes with a forum to review our progress on achieving agency priorities and to seek your ideas and input on ways we can continue to improve the IHS. Our agency priorities serve as a framework to discuss areas where we need to make improvements and are based on input from Tribes. Our agency priorities are as follows:

1. To renew and strengthen our partnership with Tribes;
2. To reform the IHS;
3. To improve the quality of and access to care;
4. To make all our work transparent, accountable, fair, and inclusive.

Our work on these agency priorities is ongoing and we value your feedback and advice, especially since the challenges we face are significant. Our partnership over the past few years has resulted in positive outcomes, including significant progress on increases in the IHS budget. While our goal is to continue to work towards more progress, there is clearly more for us to do.

I recently sent you a summary of our Tribal consultation activities to date along with an update on progress and outcomes. You can find a copy on our Tribal Leader Letter section on the IHS website at www.ihs.gov. While we have worked to provide updates and information to you in various formats, including in-person sessions, at meetings and conferences, on conference calls and via videoconference, we realize that the recent restrictions in travel and conference expenditures for all federal agencies have reduced time where we can meet in person, and those interactions are also important as a part of our Government-to-Government relationship. Therefore, we are holding these listening sessions as a chance to meet in person with you in your IHS Area. We realize this time to meet in person in your Area is also important since not all Tribes can travel to meetings in Washington, D.C., and we want to make sure our work reflects the input from all of the Tribes we serve.

Your Area Director will work with you and Area Tribes to arrange a convenient date for the listening session. A general announcement will be provided at least 30 days prior to the scheduled event. The listening sessions will begin in the upcoming weeks and continue until the end of the fiscal year.

You are always welcome to provide your input or recommendations at any time via postal mail, e-mail at consultation@ihs.gov, through individual Tribal delegation meetings, or in-person when you see me at meetings and events.

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Thank you for your partnership and I look forward to seeing you soon during our upcoming Area listening session.

Sincerely,

/Yvette Roubideaux/

Yvette Roubideaux, M.D., M.P.H.
Acting Director