



FEB 21 2003

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am enclosing a proposed Indian Health Service (IHS) policy revision for your review and comment. This proposed revision addresses the existing IHS process for funding newly recognized Tribes by establishing a funding formula that is synchronized with the methodologies and data calculation process in use within the Agency. For your convenience, I have also included the current IHS policy (IHS SGM 97-1) for addressing newly recognized Tribes and a reference document detailing the three-step process for developing a new Tribe's funding need. I believe these additional documents will greatly assist you in your review of the proposed policy revision.

You will note during your review of the attached draft policy revision that there are no significant changes from the current policy in regard to assigned roles and responsibilities; however, there is specificity given to the formula data to be considered in developing the funding requirements for a new Tribe. I believe we are proposing an improved, consistent process.

Please direct your comments to Mr. Douglas Black, Director, IHS Office of Tribal Programs: 801 Thompson Avenue, Suite 220, Rockville, Maryland 20852. These comments should be received by Mr. Black no later than Friday, May 30, 2003.

In addition to requesting your review and comment on the proposed policy revision, a draft has been distributed for a concurrent Agency-wide review.

Thank you for committing your time and resources to addressing health policy issues on behalf of the American Indian and Alaska Native people that we serve. I look forward to receiving your comments.

Sincerely yours,

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Enclosures (3)